

# MONMOUTHSHIRE **Free Press** 45p Wednesday, December 14, 2016

THE ancient Chinese philosopher and writer Lao Tzu (570-490 BC) wrote the following: "If there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations. If there is to be peace in the nations, there must be peace in the cities. If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbours. If there is to be peace between neighbours, there must be peace in the home. If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart."

I would like to think my Thoughts from January will continue with the subject of peace, as surely this is what we all pray about, strive for, and try to determine how it can be achieved. After all, does not the popular song give us this challenge, "Let there be Peace on Earth, and let it begin with Me"?

May we never underestimate the power and ability we each have to achieve great things through small beginnings, and how so often the first step is by setting your mind firmly on something. So why not

make that something peace as we begin to enter 2017.

Jesus came with a message of peace into a world of war and hatred and occupation, just like today. He spoke God's message without faltering, even to death, and today two billion people round the world continue to proclaim the word and often by taking great risks in areas of persecution, now as then. Little has changed, but that also includes the human spirit and the power of God through us, by grace and perseverance enabling us to do great things, individually and corporately.

So, my Christmas message this year, which will continue for a while next year, is peace in all its promise, variety and yes, difficulty. Let me draw to a close by quoting Mother Teresa who said: "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

For now, may the Prince of Peace go with you this Christmas time and into the new year. Merry Christmas and a happy new year to you all.

*Rev Preben Andersen*

## Thought for the weak



with the Rev Preben Andersen