

*A Christmas Message from
Bishop Julian Gordy
of the ELCA-Southeastern Synod*



The Nativity, Gerard van Honthorst, 1622

Since Christmas comes at the end of the calendar year, we face the troubling juxtaposition of the angel's proclamation - Peace, Good Will - with the annual recounting of all the ways in which peace and good will do not characterize the world. It is to this reality that poet Denise Levertov (1923-1997) addressed her poem "On the Mystery of the Incarnation." I hope that it will be for you, as it is for me this year, a word of hope in the one who comes to us as we are, to make us the people of God.

**It's when we face for a moment
the worst our kind can do, and shudder to know
the taint in our own selves, that awe
cracks the mind's shell and enters the heart:**

**not to a flower, not to a dolphin,
to no innocent form
but to this creature vainly sure
it and no other is god-like, God
(out of compassion for our ugly
failure to evolve) entrusts,
as guest, as brother,
the Word.**

Grace, peace and joy!
Julian Gordy