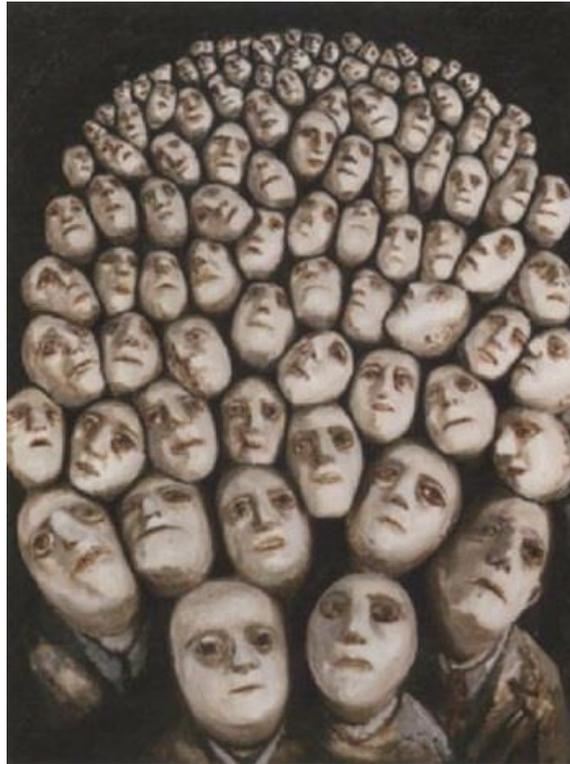


ADVENT PRAYER ENCOURAGEMENT

Isaiah 9:2 'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned'



Evelyn Williams (1929- 2012) 'People Waiting'

From the bottom to the top, faces stretch out, becoming smaller and smaller. They all resemble each other, yet they are not the same. The painting appears to emphasize a common humanity, a unique and preciousness of life. This is us this Advent, a community waiting. Each Advent we wait **yet** this year waiting has a strange resonance. Our liberty has been defined by lockdown, our demands for racial, social and climate justice is more urgent, our longing for the Saviour sharpened by collective fear and grief in the face of a pandemic.

Whose are the upturned, expectant faces? Ours of course as we look up for inspiration, a word, a certainty, A way through the twists and turns of an extraordinary year that has left many bewildered by loss. So here we all stand on the threshold of Advent, humanity, huddled together for comfort, longing for deliverance. Let us be obedient, alert, eyes wide open in faith.

Fearful and weary

We watch and wait

Into the world's deep need

Come Lord Jesus Amen.