

22nd December 2021

Best

**"Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
While fields, and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy."**

Isaac Watts, Joy to the World

What's been your "best Christmas ever"? When I wrote a contemporary parable with that title for *A Blessing to Follow**, several years ago, I recounted a Christmas tale that centred on Ernie, Mags and their family.

The story concluded with the affirmation from Ernie to Father Gallagher, that this local priest had helped his family have "the best Christmas ever" because he'd brought them a second-hand Christmas tree. The tatty Christmas tree was singularly devoid of beauty. But then, Ernie and Mags had been too low on funds this Christmas to buy one of their own. So, with a little care and attention, some strategically placed tinsel and a few balloons, the tree soon had pride of place in a family home. The "sounding joy!" of Ernie's gratitude to Father Gallagher was repeated several times! It was, he said, the best Christmas ever ...

What's been your best Christmas? More than a nice Christmas tree, I hope ... And anyway, isn't it our job – as I'm sure it was for Father Gallagher – to make sure we look past the tree and find the true meaning of it all? For, when we do, isn't *every* Christmas potentially then best?

*It's the best Christmas ever
when someone gets a gift
beyond their wild imaginings and dreams.
It's the best Christmas ever,
when expectations shift,
and spirit-songs have hope among their themes.*

*It's the best Christmas ever –
the Gift above all else
is offered now from Love's own treasure-store.
It's the best Christmas ever
as Grace comes down for all,
to fill our homes, to bless our lives once more.*

A prayer for today

The best of all? The most of all? The joy of all? Blessings for all! Amen

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>

*See: "A Blessing to follow" by Tom Gordon – www.ionabooks.com