

22nd December 2025

Sharing

“Happiness never decreases by being shared.”

Gautama Buddha (attrib), *Sutta Nipita*

What does sharing really mean at Christmas time? This piece from my book, *With an Open Eye* (www.ionabooks.com), might offer some clues.

When children are small, so we're told,
they can play next to each other and look as if they're sharing.

But they're not.

It's called 'parallel play'. But it's not sharing.

They don't know how to yet.

It'll come, so we're told,

when 'parallel play' turns into proper collaboration,
and children learn to share as they should.

When grown-ups are small, so we're told,
they can live next to each other and look as if they're sharing.

But they're not.

It's called 'selfishness'. And it's not sharing.

They haven't learned how to yet.

It'll come, so we're told,

when selfishness gives way to proper caring and giving,
and we all learn to share as we should.

When nations are small, so we're told,
they can exist next to each and look as if they're sharing.

But they're not.

It's called 'international tension'. And it's not sharing.

They don't know how to yet.

Peace will come, so we're told,

when power and might are replaced by proper cooperation,
and nations learn to share as they should.

When Christmas is small, so we're told,
we can prepare next to each other and look as if we're sharing.

But we're not.

It's called 'not caring about anyone else'. And it's not sharing.

We haven't got round to it yet.

It'll come, so we're told,

when our preparations remind us about the proper meaning of it all,
and Advent teaches us to share as we should.

A prayer for today

Lord, let my happiness increase through my sharing, as you've shared your all with me.