CONSERVATIVE

Christmas Quotables

TEMPLETON PRESS
Introduction

Everyone wants to go home for Christmas. There are a thousand reasons—to see your family, to sleep in your old bedroom, to savor the special smell of your house mixed with pine in a way that’s impossible to replicate anywhere else on earth.

This is the stuff of Christmas. It’s also the stuff of this little book.
Christmas is many things: It’s the expedition to find a tree; the passel of cards from friends you’ve collected over a lifetime; the look of joy and amazement on your kids’ faces when they come down on Christmas morning and see that Santa came, just like they’d been dreaming.

But let’s not airbrush this. It’s also the endless loop of Mariah Carey warbling. The gladiator combat while you try to get that last Tickle Me Elmo. The aunt who throws a Bible at your head during an argument over politics at Christmas dinner. (True story.) But these aren’t bugs.
Not really. They’re features. Because they’re part of Christmas—part of your Christmas—and they’re there for you, every year, too.

This constancy is what makes Christmas so special. Christmas is compulsory, as Garrison Keillor says, it’s something we all go through together. You don’t even have to be Christian. (A few of the contributors to this book are Jewish, actually, and all of them have warm feelings for the day.)

When you celebrate Christmas, you’re connected to all the Christmases past—
right back to the very first one, where the little Lord lay still in the manger—and also to all the Christmases spanning out to the horizon of the future. It’s a beautiful thing to contemplate. Almost as beautiful as the love that gave us Christmas.

But the thing to remember is that while it’s nice to do it if you can, you don’t really have to go home for Christmas. Because Christmas is home.

—Jonathan V. Last
I don’t notice it,
but my eyes are moist.
My throat is dry.
And there in the pale light
of the glistening tree,
hope envelops me like
swaddling clothes. . . .