

Something to think about :

February 2010 week 1: **Time for the seasons:**

I went to the supermarket in the first week of this New Year to replenish the food cupboards after the influx of visitors over Christmas and New Year. I was anticipating strawberries and new corn, peaches and plums and new seasons apples to supplement the remains of the Christmas cake and mince pies. My summer-taste buds were all geared up! As I walked through the door an involuntary “Oh no” escaped my lips as I was confronted by a heaped display of Hot Cross Buns! Who wants to think about death by execution and betrayal and despair while soaking up the sun on the beach! I was still enjoying the red of the pohutakwa blossom that we attach to Christmas in our southern hemisphere with the message of new life and birth that this season brings to us. I know there has been an economic downturn and that retailers are anxious to increase sales but really...Hot Cross Buns in January! Our liturgical seasons and their related symbols seem to have become simply another marketing ploy, a way of making money! Just as we have become adjusted to eating tomatoes and strawberries all year round - refusing to have our palates constrained by the cycles and seasons of the year, it seems we will now be offered the opportunity to eat hot-cross buns and Christmas cake, stöllen and panetone all year round too. Where has time to appreciate the various seasons of the year gone, why the pressure to rush willy-nilly from one to the next? Mixing up all the symbols and flavours means we lose any distinctiveness; we don't give ourselves time to appreciate what each season offers. As this new decade gets underway we have the opportunity to 'eat seasonally' as it were. We can slow the pace, taking the time, appreciating each season and the distinctiveness of its gifts (be they gifts of the earth or from our liturgical calendar or the season of our lives). We can choose to enrich our lives and enhance our wellbeing by taking time for 'now' and being fully present to each season – its fruit and vegetables and special food items as well as the gifts for reflection from our rich Christian traditions.