



Christmas Greetings

Dear friends, colleagues, sisters and brothers in Christ



This beautiful flower on a bush in Kenya with very sharp and solid thorns reminded me of the 'Rosa inter Spinas' motto of the Swedish Church in London.

"Just as the rose amongst thorns adds beauty to them, so the Virgin Mary adorns her offspring, for she brings forth a flower that gives a life- saving fragrance"

(Sicut rose inter spinas illis addit speciem sic venustat suam virgo maria progeniem germinavit enim florem qui vitalem dat odorem)

As we wait in these last days of Advent for the flowering of the fragrant rose in the middle of the winter, when 'half was spent the night', I pray that new joy will flower in all our hearts, no matter how sharp and unyielding the thorns around us sometimes seem. May the beauty and fragrance of Jesus the Baby dispel the darkness and cold with his eternal message of salvation clothed in vulnerability, and may he come to dwell in our hearts anew this year.

Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year

Jana

PS the image was taken during the LWF Consultation on Hermeneutics in Nairobi, September 2011, at Karen Blixen's house. I have not been able to identify the name of the plant!