



which was broadcast on BBC One on New Year's Day. The message,

Here at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, there are signs of new life all around, even in deepest winter. Kew scientists know that all life on earth – including our own – depends on plants and fungi.

And yet one fifth of the world’s plant species are at risk of extinction because of multiple threats, including climate change. Meanwhile hundreds of millions of people are already suffering the impacts of our rapidly warming planet – extreme weather, droughts and famines, and conflicts intensified by competition over natural resources.

I’ve been learning how the team here are researching solutions that protect not just the plants of the world – but also help some of its people.

Coffee is the world’s most valuable traded commodity after crude oil and supports farmers from Africa to Latin America. It’s also a crop that is highly vulnerable to climate change.

However, as Dr Olwen Grace explained to me, Kew rediscovered a wild coffee species in West Africa that thrives in warmer conditions than the now-threatened Arabica plant. This knowledge could help to protect the incomes of millions of families.

And in Kew’s tropical nursery, over 10,000 plant species – including some of the world’s rarest plants – are being studied and nurtured, preserving them for generations to come.

When it comes to climate change, it is tempting to despair, but there are real reasons to hope.

Last year, faith leaders representing three-quarters of the world’s population stood together at the Vatican and called for definitive action on climate change.

People of every background are campaigning and working for justice.

Important steps were taken at the COP26 summit. World leaders recognise the problem. Now they must agree and implement a fair solution for everyone.

When we plant a seed, we don’t see the fruit immediately. But under the surface, God is working with what we have planted.

In the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I see that God turns all endings into new beginnings, and death into life. God invites us to be part of this story – to be people who bring hope, healing and renewal to our world.

This year, let’s keep planting those seeds – let’s keep moving forward in hope.

I wish you all a happy New Year.

