

# Happy Christmas

## Welcome

*We come together to celebrate the gift of Jesus in our midst—our Emmanuel God. May each of us gathered here today be blessed by our loving God in ways that are just right for us.*

### Christmas Joy

In his Christmas message this year, Archbishop Christopher Prowse emphasised that giving love is the greatest love there is. “It is certainly true to say at Christmas – ‘Isn’t it great to be loved!’,’ the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn said. “But it is even greater to say ‘Isn’t it great to love!’” “Jesus is always found in the latter. Jesus is forever the guiding and saving light that scatters the darkness of sin. “If this is what Jesus does, so must we do the same this Christmas.” Archbishop Christopher drew upon the symbolism of light and darkness at Christmas Time. “It seems that Jesus was born in the middle of the night. People were sleeping,” Archbishop Christopher said. “Yet, it was not simply the absence of the sun that caused this midnight. Another type of “darkness” was at play: inhospitality.

“The Holy Family, at least at this crucial moment of salvation history, were homeless due to the absence of hospitality in Bethlehem.” Reinforcing that the giving of love and the shining of light are not simply an academic or a sentimental exercise, Archbishop Christopher highlighted the practical charity done by groups such as St Vincent de Paul and others in the Canberra community. They help relieve homelessness, hunger and anguish for “the lost, the least and the last,” especially at Christmas Time.

“Darkness will not have the last word,” he said.

“There is hope. There is light. For Christians that LIGHT IS JESUS, our hope, and glory. This is our Christmas joy!”

### Archbishop Christopher Prowse

*Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, December 2018*



JOY TO THE WORLD

### Collection

Only one collection today—the **Archbishop’s Christmas Appeal**. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

### Dear Parishioners,

Each year the celebration of Christmas offers us the pleasant opportunity to present one another our fraternal good wishes **for a Blessed Christmas and a fruitful New Year!**



I want to address these good wishes to everyone in our parish family and community especially to those who are ill, those who are experiencing difficulties at this time. I hope that the light, which shines forth from the grotto of Bethlehem, will illumine the heart and conscience of all, so that our personal life may radiate the mercy and the loving face of the Father, as these were seen in baby Jesus.

May I take this opportunity to thank all our parishioners and friends here at Our Lady Help of Christians, Ardlethan and the Temora Mission for all that you do in helping us along the journey. May God be with us all as

we go forward.

May this Christmas be a time of joy and happiness for you and your loved ones. I wish you all a Blessed and Holy Christmas.

### Fr Sijo Jose

### Dear Parishioners,

What an ideal opportunity we have at Christmas as we gather together with family and friends to pause, to reflect and wonder with gratitude at the great Love that is manifested to us at Christmas, A Love that is with us at all times but often missed – a Love that is Emmanuel, reminding us that God is with us always, a Love that is expressed in the care and outreach of others, a Love that is celebrated with family and friends, a Love that is shared with those in need, a Love that invites us to look beyond ourselves to others, a Love that gifts us with joy beyond telling, a Love that instils hope as we move forward. May your celebration of Christmas be a time when you share a little more in the reality of the love of God that is revealed in a baby, born to Mary and Joseph, who were refugees looking for a place to give birth to their child, Jesus. May we open our hearts to welcome Jesus in one another and those who knock on our hearts searching for care and love.

### Sr Maureen

*‘What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.’*

attributed to Agnes M. Pharo

