





Welcme to our eglebration of  
The Nativity of the Lord.  
A Happy and Holy Christmas to All.

A message from the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference.

**Dear Friends,**

Christmas is a special time when we remember God's closeness to us and our responsibility to become peace-makers. In this season of peace and goodwill we see our God, the maker of all things visible and invisible, reduced to the most vulnerable of creatures; another little Middle Eastern boy caught up in homelessness, poverty and a cruel cycle of violence. Yes, our God gave up everything in order to become one with us. You cannot get closer than that! He comes to us, and stays with us, especially in times of difficulty and loneliness.

We might say that Christmas is the feast of "closeness". It is the time when family and friends who are separated - by geography, by hurt or anger, or simply by the distances created by time - come together again to celebrate this joyous feast and to renew their bonds with one another and, we hope, with Christ.

Christmas reunions can be wonderful. They can also open old wounds and bring back painful memories. To make Christmas joyful we must be able to forgive one another and let go of past injuries - real and imagined.

My prayer for you and for all, therefore, is that you will feel God's closeness this Christmas and become instruments of peace in the New Year ahead! Let us keep the lost and abandoned close to our hearts.

+ Denis J. Hart  
President

~ **Grace at Christmas Dinner** ~

*God of Christmas and of every day,  
giver of all good gifts,  
we thank you for the many ways  
you have blessed us.*

*We are grateful for each person  
gathered around this table.*

*Bless us, our food and  
our company today.*

*Bless those we love  
who are not with us.*

*With gratitude and love,  
we remember your humble birth  
into our lives and so pray for  
those without food or family  
or friendship at this time.*

*We remember the stable in which  
you were born and so pray  
for those with no place to live.*

*We join your angels in giving glory  
to God in the highest and in praying  
for peace and goodwill on earth.*

*Help us to see what really matters  
and to respond with faith, hope  
and love. Make of our hearts a crib  
in which to place the Christ child.*

*Keep us safe and close to you in  
the year ahead. For you are our  
Christmas Lord, now and forever.*

*Amen.*

<http://www.parra.catholic.org.au/catholicoutlook>

DEAR God

Remind me that  
the greatest gifts  
are wrapped in  
people  
not paper

Amen

Please pray for the sick and their carers: Barry Bowden; Madge Boylan; Margaret Clancy; John Crowley; Paul Kalmar; Kevin Madden and John Scott.

**The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.**

This wondrous birth brought new hope and meaning to the human race. Even with all the distractions of gift buying, the tinsel and coloured lights, there is a belief that this is a time of joy and renewal. This new life is reflected in our family gatherings and in our efforts to remember those who have no one to rejoice with. This is a time when we remember people who are less fortunate than ourselves. The year has seen civil war and famine, human lives lost as a result of natural disasters. Sometimes we feel driven to say, 'It's all too big! There's nothing I can do', but there is always something. We can open our hearts and our purses or give generously of our time. We can open our eyes to the needs of those we encounter in our daily lives and resolve to share our Christmas happiness with them. We remember him who is Wonderful-Counsellor, Prince-of-Peace.

- from Daily Prayer online

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE**

The Office will reopen on  
Wednesday 18/1/2017.

**Happy 48th Anniversary  
Christa and David Buckley**  
for 28th December

**Happy Birthday**  
Sean Lillis ~ 27th December  
Fred Patzman ~ 27th December

**New Year Mass Times**

*(Please note that there will be  
no weekday Masses celebrated  
from 26th - 30th December.)*

**Sacred Heart Blackheath**

New Year's Eve  
Saturday 31st December  
at 9.00am (not 8am)  
New Year's Day  
Sunday 1st January at 9.30am

**St Paul's Mt Victoria**

New Year's Eve  
Saturday 31st December  
at 6.00pm  
Normal scheduled Mass (Vigil)  
will be celebrated on  
Saturday 7th January at 6.00pm

**The Epiphany Pilgrimage**

**Journey of the Magi: 2-8 January 2017**

The Epiphany Pilgrimage is a seven-day, 100km pilgrimage through the Blue Mountains bushland. Pilgrims stay overnight at parishes along the route, experiencing the welcoming hospitality of parishioners and spending time in prayer, adoration and fellowship.

Pilgrims include Fr Piotr Kruk OP, Assistant Priest at Kingswood Parish, and Sr Rosie Drum MGL, Assistant Director of CYP. The pilgrimage finishes on the Feast of the Epiphany at the Chapel of the Magi at Bell. There are many ways that you can participate, either as a walking pilgrim or in the evenings of prayer, adoration and fellowship. To find out more visit

**www.epiphanypilgrimage.org**  
*(Pilgrims will stay in our Parish Hall on  
7th January and join our community for  
Mass on the Feast of the Epiphany,  
Sunday 8th January, before the final  
16km trek to Bell.*

**Christmas Hamper Raffle Winners**

**\*Monica Bright \*Jarrod of Hartley  
\*J & T Abel \*Rod Hill**

Thank you to all who contributed items and purchased tickets. \$1189.00 was raised (just \$4 shy of the 2007 record but a grand result nevertheless.)