

# THE BULLETIN

ST THERESA'S PARISH

## MISSION STATEMENT

*St Theresa's Catholic Parish is a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming community committed to living and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Under our baptismal mission and inspired by the Spirit, we are bread for one another and nourished we reach out to make a difference in the world.*

24—25 December 2025

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

YEAR A

### Christmas Music

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

The glory of God and profound peace reaching out to embrace the whole of humanity are dynamically related in the baby in the manger. This is the song of the angels, and it is our privilege to join in that song at this Christmas Mass.

Every baby is a promise of a new future which fills one with hope. But *this* baby is unique. *This* Jewish boy baby is the body language of God. *This* baby is the sonburst of God entering our dark world. *This* baby shows us that God is not impossibly remote but, rather, God is as intimately close as a vulnerable infant.

And *this* baby fulfils all the yearning of the human heart. We want to love to the utmost. We want to be loved to the utmost. *This* baby enables both because he is without any finite boundaries or restraints: He is in-finite love reaching out to us.

Can we grasp all this? Probably not. So, like the little lambs nuzzling up to the manger, we just follow some deep intuition which says: 'I must kneel in adoration, it is good to be here.' We could pause for a moment to pray for the resolve to do our bit to echo the angel's message: 'I bring you good news of great joy to be shared by *all* peoples.'



### Christmas a Time of Good Will

© Dianne Bergant CSA

Christmas is really a time of universal good will. In response to God's gracious gift of transformation we are invited to rejoice with grateful hearts. The royal infant whose birth we celebrate is the one who was promised, the long-awaited messianic king, the one who inaugurates the age of transforming grace. He is the source of rejoicing in those who receive him with great gratitude. Only those who are open to God's gift can receive it with thanksgiving. When it is received, however, marvellous things happen. Their identities are changed, all the cosmos joins in the festivity, and righteousness blossoms in history.

The life of baptismal fidelity is the grateful response to the gift of God's initiative. Such a life is rooted in the mystery of the triune God in whom believers are baptised. It is a life lived in the rebirth of the spirit of God that animates us to live blamelessly in a way that shows our appreciation of this gift. We are inspired to live lives that are manifestations of holiness.

Christmas morning may be a time for opening gifts and for family celebrations, but it is also a time for people of means to reach out to those who are less fortunate. Christmas celebrates generosity, first the generosity of God and then our generosity with each other, especially with the poor. Solidarity with the outcasts of society, with those who are barred from the power structures of society, demonstrates the true spirit of Christmas.

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 62:1-5*

'The prophecy of Isaiah'

**Second Reading:** *Titus 2:11-14*

'The grace of God has been revealed to all people'

**Gospel:** *Luke 2:1-14*

'The birth of Jesus'

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 62:11-12*

'Isaiah foretells the coming of the Saviour'

**Second Reading:** *Titus 3:4-7*

'The love and compassion of God has saved us'

**Gospel:** *Luke 2:15-20*

'The shepherds visit the manger'



27—28 December 2025

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

YEAR A

### *Pope Leo's Lens*

© by Nick Brodie

'The Spirit', Pope Leo tells us, 'sends us to continue the work of Christ in the world's peripheries, marked at times by war, injustice and suffering.' As followers of the Christ whose family fled persecution, we should always stand with the persecuted.

Our faith, the Pope reminds us, 'helps us to resist evil and to persevere in doing good.' But, he adds, it should also transform each one of us into 'an instrument of the salvation that even today God wishes to bring about in the world.'

The way of salvation which Christ calls us to follow, the Pope says, 'is fulfilled when we take responsibility and, with the compassion of the Gospel, care for the suffering of others.'

And we need not go far to do this, the Pope points out, because 'poverty, suffering and the desire for a greater hope have made their way to us.' The migrants we find in our communities, he says, who have fled violence and injustice and faced danger and sorrow 'cannot and must not find the coldness of indifference or the stigma of discrimination!'

In the face of hardening social attitudes towards migrants we Christians are called to 'open our arms and hearts to them, welcoming them as brothers and sisters, and being for them a presence of consolation and hope.'

[Quotes from *Homily on the Jubilee of the Missionary World and Jubilee of Migrants*, 5 Oct 2025: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/homilies/2025/documents/20251005-giubileo-mondo-missionario.html>]



### *Two Holy Families*

© Fr Michael Tate; [mtate@bigpond.com](mailto:mtate@bigpond.com)

Herod is seeking to annihilate all the male children in Bethlehem. The child Jesus is in mortal danger. 'Arise, take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt.' And Joseph did so. *That* night and *by* night, such was the urgency.

Have you ever thought: What if Egyptian border guards had turned back this refugee family? What if, instead of finding safe haven and sanctuary, this desperate family had been denied entry? The Divine plan to rescue Jesus from a murderous tyrant depended not only on Joseph but, also, on the Egyptian people.

And so we discover two Holy Families in this Gospel episode. One is the little Holy Family with Joseph, Mary and Jesus. The other is the larger Holy Family of humanity embodied in those Egyptians who provided sanctuary, who opened their land to allow Joseph, Mary and Jesus to settle out of danger.

We might pause for a moment to ask: Can we be as hospitable and open as the Egyptians of today's Gospel? Another baby in another family of refugees may depend on our answer!

#### **FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY**

**First Reading:** *Sirach* 3:2-6. 12-14

'What is expected of the chosen of God'

**Second Reading:** *Colossians* 3:12-21

'Kindness and respect for parents is urged'

**Gospel:** *Matthew* 2:13-15. 19-23

An angel tells Joseph to take Mary and the baby and flee to Egypt.

#### **HEALING FOR THE SICK**

**Parishioners**—Robert Gillespie, Betty Bagley, Anne Thomas, Noel Murphy, Susan Quirk, Marie Ah See & Elizabeth Curtis

**Friends and Family**—Lawrie Atzeni, Imogen Atkins, Catherine Castelli, Naser, Madeline (Sally) Gray, Mary Gleeson, Geraldine Hurley, Iain Bruce, Jennifer Fogarty, Erica Armagnacq, Geoff Doyle, Anna O'Toole, Phil Connolly, Shona Kraayvanger, Indiana Harman, Louis Gandini, Connie Bamgart, Max Shearer, John Mullen, Fr Peter McGrath CP, Molly Schmidt, The Dowling Family, Marty Heysen & Judy March





# 12 Christmas PRAYERS

## Joy

May the joy  
of Christ be felt  
through us. **Luke 1:44**

## FAITH

Increase our faith so we fully trust in  
Your promises. **Matthew 1:24**

## LIGHT

May the light of Christ  
shine from within us.  
**Isaiah 9:2**

## PROMISE

Thank you for the promise  
of eternal life through Jesus.  
**John 3:16**

## SIMPLICITY

You came as  
a baby in a manger,  
help us find value  
in the simple things.  
**Luke 2:7**

## GENEROSITY

Show us what gifts we have  
to offer and help us  
give them generously.  
**Matthew 2:11**

## TOGETHERNESS

Thank you that the gift  
of Jesus makes us one family  
together in Christ. **John 1:12**

## LOVE

Help us see ways to turn  
love into action this Christmas.  
**Matthew 25:40**

## PEACE

May the peace of Christ  
cover the busyness  
of this season.  
**Isaiah 9:6**

## GRATITUDE

Thank you for all of our blessings,  
not just the gifts under the tree.  
**Luke 1:49**

## OBEDIENCE

Help us to be obedient  
to You even when we  
don't fully understand.  
**Luke 1:38**

## HOPEFULNESS

Fill us with hope for  
the coming of our savior,  
Jesus Christ. **Daniel 2:44**

AMEN!



**Parish Office**  
**Closed**  
**25 December**  
**Re-opens**  
**Monday**  
**12 January**  
**2026**

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Matthew O'Dea

Joan Mitchell

Tom Smith

Charles Arnold

Nella Jensen

Jim Churchett

Rex Bice

Gerard Dunne

Frank Hill

Ellen Skippen

Bob Mackie

Maureen Long

Judith Ryan

Denise Long

Russell Cartwright

Monica Bierhoff

Alan O'Connell

Dot Gleeson

Robert Priestly

Marg Mackie

Dilworth Zimbwa

Fr Thomas Concannon

Marie Wood

Denis Brennan

Noel Bourke

Daniel McGurk

Brendan McDowell

Graham Lane

Jim McKinley

Fr Tom O'Brien msc

Nora Black

Maisie Hutchins

Wanda Beardmore

Philomene Fry

Mary Duggan

Neil Hooper

Patti Topp

Margaret Blackie

#### PRIESTS' RETREAT - MASS AVAILABILITY

Each January, our clergy take well-deserved time to rest and renew on retreat. During this time, there will be disruptions to the regular Mass timetable. During the 2026 Clergy Retreat, 4-9 January 2026, the normal weekday Masses will be followed at St Patrick's Cathedral Toowoomba, visit the website for details

<https://www.stpats.org.au>.

All are welcome to St Patrick's.

**St Theresa's parish will be having lay led services during this time on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> & Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January.**

**Sunday masses as per usual.** For other locations in the diocese during this time please contact your local parish.

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#### 2025 Diocesan Annual Christmas Collection

Each year, 50% of our Christmas Collection goes towards a special need, often beyond our shores. This year the Diocesan Council of Priests have decided to support The Missionaries of St Francis de Sales' Parish of Our Lady of Mercy in Rioverde, Ecuador where many are suffering from extreme poverty. This area serves over 35,000 people across 45 rural villages in the Esmeraldas Province. Your generous support will ensure that this community, despite its many setbacks, can face the future with hope and resilience.

The remaining 50% of the Christmas Collection will go to our local St Vincent de Paul Conference to help support the needs of local families and individuals.

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#### Sacramental Program 2026

In 2026, St Theresa's parish will offer Confirmation and First Eucharist in June and First Reconciliation in August.

Parent information nights will be advertised in the parish bulletin and Mater Dei school newsletter as well as physical paper copies will be available in the church foyer and parish office.

The first Parent information night for Confirmation and First Eucharist will be Wednesday 11 February at 6pm. Children who are in year 4 or above are welcome to receive these sacraments.

The second Parent information night for First Reconciliation will be Wednesday 22 July at 6pm. Children who are in year 3 or above are welcome to receive this sacrament.

If you have any questions please contact the parish office or Monica Brennan, the pastoral associate  
by phone: 4639 4588 or

email: [sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au) or  
[sttheresas.pastoralassociate@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sttheresas.pastoralassociate@twb.catholic.org.au)

#### BAPTISMS

**28 December 2025**

we welcome into our parish

*Cedric Howard*

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**3 January 2026**

we welcome into our parish

*Oliver Larkin*

*Charles Duguid*

*Florence Duguid*



Baptisms are celebrated  
on the second and

fourth Sunday of the month  
after Mass at 11.00am or  
during Mass  
at the 6.00pm Saturday, Vigil

#### MASS TIMES—December 2025

FRI—26	NO MASS
WED—31	NO MASS

#### MASS TIMES—January 2026

THUR—1	9.00am <i>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</i>
FRI—2	NO MASS
SAT—3	6.00pm VIGIL MASS
SUN—4	9.30am MASS
WED—7	Lay Liturgy
FRI—9	Lay Liturgy
SAT—10	6.00pm VIGIL MASS
SUN—11	9.30am MASS

**DILEXI TE (I HAVE LOVED YOU):** Pope Leo XIV's first Apostolic Exhortation sees the love of Christ incarnated in love for the poor, in caring for the sick, opposing slavery, defending women who experience exclusion and violence, making education available to all, accompanying migrants, charitable giving, working for equality and more. By visiting <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv>

**If you are Gluten intolerant and require a special host, please advise the Mass Coordinator.**





## Parish Ministries

### Parish Pastoral Council

Fr Brian Noonan, Monica Brennan, Elizabeth Curtis, Allison Busiko, Greg Hallam, Gerard Hore, Julie Raitelli, David Rogan, Martin Stinson, Bernadette/Glen Whisson, Dave Wilson.

### Finance Committee

Fr. Brian Noonan, Warren Dredge, Ray Taylor, Shane Blakeley, Pat Richardson, Tim Burgess.

### Liturgy Team

Fr. Brian Noonan, Peter Kenny, Monica Brennan, Jan Mayo, Gay Jorgensen, Elizabeth Stewart.

### Musicians

Norma Kenny, Kathy Sternes, Elizabeth Stewart, Libby Rosentreter, Charlotte Stinson & Emma Stinson.

### Baptism Team

Jenny Ryan, Bernadette Hede, Jan Watkins, Anne Anderson, Jane Burgess, Catherine Cooper, Tracy Stinson, Elizabeth Curtis, Monica Brennan

### Sacramental Team

Monica Brennan, Alison Busiko, David Wilson, Gay Jorgensen.

### Consolation Team

Fr Brian Noonan, Peter Kenny, Josephine Nolan, Monica Brennan

### Welcome & Hospitality Team

Paul & Kathryn Marangelli, Maureen Burke.

### Family Groups

Contact Parish Office

### Care & Concern Team

Contact: Damian Carroll 0409 662 047

### RCIA

Contact: David Wilson 0451 131 849

**AN INVITATION TO A HISTORIC MOMENT—Cardinal Bychok Visits Toowoomba** We are excited to announce a truly historic occasion for our Diocese! This coming March 2026, the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba will welcome His Eminence Mykola Cardinal Bychok CSSR, Australia's Cardinal. We are hosting two exclusive events:

**Dinner – 26 March 2026 & Breakfast – 27 March 2026.** Each event will feature a live interview with His Eminence, conducted by Michael Crutcher, former editor of *The Courier-Mail*. Tickets are now on sale via <https://www.twb.catholic.org.au/cathedral/> All proceeds will support the restoration of St Patrick's Cathedral, preserving this sacred landmark as we prepare to celebrate the Diocese's centenary in 2029.

### CATHEDRAL RESTORATION PROJECT—Raffle 30—Dec 2025—March 2026

Every \$10 ticket helps restore St Patrick's Cathedral's stained-glass windows—and gives you the chance to win a \$300K First Prize Pack, including two luxury cars and \$140K in gold bullion! Learn more and purchase tickets: [www.playforpurpose.com.au/catholic-diocese](http://www.playforpurpose.com.au/catholic-diocese)

**IGNITE YOUTH - SUMMER CAMP 2026** 8-11 January 2026 at QCCC Mapleton, 70 Obi Obi Rd Mapleton (Sunshine Coast region) Cost: \$370 pp, also costs for travel and merch (late fees apply after 2/1/26). Summer Camp is four unforgettable days away, filled with fun and getting closer to Jesus. Huge outdoor games, swimming, amazing rallies, dance parties and 300 new friends to make! Aimed at young people in Grades 7-12 in 2026, Summer Camp is run by a team of experienced and emerging Catholic youth leaders who will accompany young people on a journey to discover more about themselves, Jesus and His hope for their lives.

Find out more and register at [igniteyouth.com/summercamp](http://igniteyouth.com/summercamp)

**SAVE THE DATE: ST MARY'S WARWICK CENTENARY:** 15 March 2026. Mark your diary for 2026. St Mary of the Assumption Church Warwick will be celebrating 100 years! More details of events to follow.

**SAVE THE DATE: SPRED 40 YEARS IN TOOWOOMBA DIOCESE:** Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 at St Theresa's Parish Toowoomba. The wonderful ministry of SPRED is celebrating 40 years in our Diocese in 2026. Mark the date in your calendar; more details to follow in the new year.

## 2026—A New Year's Blessing

May your inner vision be transformed so that you can see more clearly your own journey with all humankind as a journey of peace, hope, and bondedness (Nm 24:15-17; Jn 20:20).

May you not be afraid of the questions that press upon your mind and heart. May you welcome the questions and wait patiently for the day when they will have their answers (Mt 11:3).

May you be the one with welcome in your smile and hello etched upon your hand, the hand you extend to everyone who blesses you with presence (Lk 7:36-50).

May you awake each morning with thank you on your lips and in your heart, recognizing that all is gift, that all is blessing (Ps 138:1).

May your friendship with God be strong and healthy. May that love be both a comfort and a challenge as you struggle to find your way in the new year (Jn 21:15-19).

May your spirit be open and perceptive in discovering the will of God for you.

May your prayer be that of wisdom, guidance, and a deeper understanding of God's way for you (Lk 1:26-38).

May your life this new year be a living legacy to your God.

— Joyce Rupp in *May I Have This Dance? An Invitation to Faithful Prayer Throughout the Year* (excerpt)



1 January 2026

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

YEAR A

### ***The Calendar-Shattering Mary***

© Fr Michael Tate; [mtate@bigpond.com](mailto:mtate@bigpond.com)

It is fitting that on New Year's Day we celebrate the calendar-shattering event in human history: the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

In the Western Church, the young woman is titled 'Mother of God'. This signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship. We know that it encompassed a mother's horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but Mother of God.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? In the Book of Genesis, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word', the human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began, the fulcrum of history from which our calendar begins.

We could pause for a moment to pray that at the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, we may share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.



### ***The beginning of the New Year***

© by Dianne Bergant CSA

Liturgically, the Octave of Christmas commemorates: the Solemnity of the Mother of God; the day designated for prayers for global peace; and the beginning of the New Year. Though the shepherds gain insight into the presence of God by seeing this holy family, it is Mary who holds all these things in her heart. She is the one who ponders the significance of these mysterious events. Mary becomes for Christians an inspiration of contemplation and reflection. She inspires us to consider deeply the significance of events, lest we go blandly through life without meaning or direction. She inspires us to fidelity to the practices of our faith, practices which are the disciplines of soul that lead the community to a clearer focus on God's presence in human affairs.

The theme of peace appears today on many levels. Its meaning, 'fullness of life', bursts forth in every one of the readings. The ancient prayer or blessing of peace is an appropriate start for the New Year. It resonates well with the angels' wish for people of good will. Peace is also our inheritance in Christ. As adopted children of God, we have been given the freedom to live in a godly manner, calling God our Abba. Right relationships in the covenant activity of God are the pathways of peace. The beginning of a New Year is a good time to reach out to others and to pray for God's blessing of peace for each dimension of human encounter.

#### **SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**

**First Reading:** *Numbers 6:22-27*

'Aaron is instructed on how to bless the Israelites'

**Second Reading:** *Galatians 4:4-7*

'We are children of God in the spirit that cries out 'Abba!'

**Gospel:** *Luke 2:16-21*

'The shepherds arrive at the manger'

#### **Parish Contact Details**

**St Theresa's Church**—Cnr Campbell & Curzon Sts, Toowoomba

**Parish Office**—55 Curzon Street, Toowoomba Qld 4350

Phone: 07 4639 4688 [sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au)

Website: [www.sttheresas.org.au](http://www.sttheresas.org.au)

**Office Hours**—Monday 11.00am – 5.00pm

Wednesday 8.00am – 5.00pm & Friday 10.00am—4.00pm

**Parish Priest**—Fr Brian Noonan

Ph: 0458 967 094 [bnoonan@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:bnoonan@twb.catholic.org.au)

**Pastoral Associate**—Monica Brennan

[sttheresas.pastoralassociate@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sttheresas.pastoralassociate@twb.catholic.org.au)

**Parish Secretary**—Cheryl Rens

[sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:sttheresasparish@twb.catholic.org.au)



*Stars and Seekers after Truth*

© Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

Unlike the writers of the horoscope columns in our newspapers, these Wise Men were scholar astrologers, probably from Syria or Iraq. They believed that the stars controlled the destiny of human beings, but they were open enough to the Hebrew scriptures to be led to the amazing discovery of a star-child in Bethlehem.

They knelt before this baby, doing homage, because they realised that the stars did not control *this* infant, but that there was something of this baby which caused the night sky to respond! They preserved the child from the deadly schemes of Herod, and then they returned to their home country, 'by a different way'. They were on a different journey after encountering the Child.

Who can doubt that the Holy Spirit led these wise men from the East to the manger? In fact, the Holy Spirit is at work in every human being, prompting each and every one to become seekers after Truth.

As a person responds to this prompting and tries to lead a good humane life, then the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit can draw them into the saving life of God. Thus, billions in China and India who have never heard the Gospel, can be saved. But, such persons do not savour the fullness of Truth as we do with the privilege of having the scriptures and the sacraments. Where it is possible, we are obliged to offer them the road map to the Truth.

We can take a moment to affirm our faith in the baby in the manger as the One of whom Dante spoke: 'the Love which moves the sun and other stars'. Come, let us adore him.



**JANUARY  
2026  
THE  
POPE'S  
PRAYER  
INTENTIONS**

Let us pray, that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

Leo P.P. XIV

**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 60:1-6*

'Jerusalem is exalted'

**Second Reading:** *Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6*

'Paul declares the Gentiles co-heirs to the Kingdom'

**Gospel:** *Matthew 2:1-12*

'The Wise Men journey to the infant Jesus'

**Regular Parish Gatherings & Meetings****Gospel Reflection Group Every Monday**

10am at the Parish office meeting room. All welcome

**Care & Concern Meeting 2nd Monday of the Month**

Care & Concern Meeting Monday's at 3.00pm

**Second & Fourth Tuesday of the Month**

St Vincent de Paul St Theresa's Conference, 4pm,

Contact 0408 808 437

**First Wednesday of the Month**

Parish morning tea at 9.45am, Cobb & Co Museum

**First Saturday of the Month**

Prayer Service at Infin8 Care at 9.30am

**Upcoming Parish Events—January**

1 Thursday	9.00am Mass
7 Wednesday	Parish Morning Tea
7-9 Wed-Fri	Priests' Retreat
12 Monday	Office re-opens

Gospel Reflection Group recommences 2 February

**Planned Giving**

St Theresa's Catholic Parish (*Planned Giving Only*)

**BSB: 064786 Account No: 100014392**



## CHRISTMAS 2025

I greet you as we arrive at this blessed time of Christmas. Sadly, we come to these days of happiness with a heavy darkness over our nation following the Bondi shootings and the death of so many innocent people. We are left bewildered as to why such hatred should be rained down upon the Jewish people seeking to celebrate one of their religious festivals. We say, loudly and with the strongest conviction, that we will not tolerate antisemitism as it erodes the right to freedom of religion and its practice. More so, it undermines the basic rights of people to be able to live in our Country without persecution. To know that everyone's dignity is respected and that we should be able to live safely, with our basic human rights protected.

To all who are suffering at this time of joy, we stand with you and share your pain. As a community where prayer is at the centre of our lives, we assure you that we are praying for you, especially when we gather for Christmas Mass. May our gracious God help to ease the burden of those suffering in any way.

So, what does the celebration of Christmas say to us this year in the light of this tragedy? What do we recall at a time like this?

We have celebrated this year a Jubilee Year of Hope. However, we ask, where is there hope now, especially since we always see Christmas as a season of hope? Hope is more than feeling optimistic. I believe it wells up inside of us because of our relations with the Almighty. Our friendship with God mirrors something of the hope we have in our families and friends. Those relationships bring comfort, encouragement, and the assurance that we are loved and not alone. Our relationship with God brings these and so much more. For us, hope springs up from inside of us when we realise that there is always another way of looking at the realities of life, especially the difficult, painful and challenging times.

The Babe of Bethlehem, God with us, assures us that nothing will ever stop the love of God being poured into our hearts. This is our hope and it is what we share with all who suffer at this confronting time. Hope springs eternal, and it was made possible by the One, Jesus, who is in truth, the hope of humanity.

This Christmas we recognise the affection we have for the Jewish people, because our Christian traditions have been born from the lived faith experiences of Judaism. For this we are thankful as we offer our respect, prayers, and the hope that the fullness of peace will eventually dwell in our Land.

I greet each one of you and your loved ones with the peace that was born in a stable, that created a new light that will forever blaze upon the face of the earth, dispelling all darkness. This is Jesus Christ, our hope!

Happy Christmas.  
**Bishop Ken Howell**  
Bishop of Toowoomba

**MOST REVEREND KENNETH M HOWELL**

**Bishop of Toowoomba**  
PO Box 756, Toowoomba Qld 4350

Tel: (+61 7) 4632 4277 • Email: [bishop@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:bishop@twb.catholic.org.au) • [www.twb.catholic.org.au](http://www.twb.catholic.org.au)