



St Mary of the Angels Basilica

St Mary Of The Angels Parish j Geelong
150 Yarra Street · Geelong · Victoria · 3220
Ph: (03) 5222 1977 Fax: (03) 5229 0587
www.stmarysgeelong.com.au

Fr James Clarke P.P.
frj@stmarysgeelong.com.au

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2020

The year 2020 will be forever burned into our collective memory. It has been a year of upheaval. We have felt dislocation, isolation and alienation. The greatest experience of denial has been the inability to access mass and the sacraments. As priests, Fr. Joseph and I were unable to connect with you, our parishioners, on that liturgical level. However, the light is beginning to shine brighter at the end of the tunnel. We are now able to gather to celebrate the Eucharist together. Our identity as a Eucharistic community is being restored. Everything is not back to normal, there are still some restrictions but with good management and the grace of God, conditions will continue to improve.

The season of Christmas is a time of goodwill and good cheer. We are able to gather to celebrate the Christmas liturgy, albeit in a truncated manner, but we are able to celebrate Christmas nonetheless. The feast of the Nativity is an important reminder of who Jesus is and how he came to be. The celebration of the birth of Jesus is the celebration of new life in the form of an infant.

In the person of the infant Jesus of Nazareth we have God incarnate. In the innocence and fragility of a newborn baby, God is born into this world. The Word of God, the Son of God is made flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Easter faith has its origin in Christmas hope. The feast of the incarnation celebrates our humanity because God broke into creation as one of us, one like us in all things but sin.

As we gather to celebrate with family and friends, we are aware of those members of our families who are no longer with us and those family members who are prevented from being with us due to restrictions on travel. We are also aware of individuals within our parish and city who, because of circumstances beyond their control, will not be able celebrate or enjoy a happy Christmas.

May this celebration of the birth of the "Prince of Peace", the one who is the hope of the world, bring peace and joy into our community, our families and into our lives.

Wishing you all a happy and holy Christmas,

Fr. Jim and Fr. Joseph.