



St Patrick's Cathedral Newsletter



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St Patrick's, in communion with St Saviour's Primary School - Madonna Sleba (4637 1555)

St Saviour's College - Sharon Collins (4637 1600)

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of this place, the Jarowair and Giabal peoples.



AN IRISH CHRISTMAS PRAYER

THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS STAR TO YOU
THE WARMTH OF HOME AND HEARTH TO YOU
THE CHEER AND GOOD WILL OF FRIENDS TO YOU
THE LOVE OF THE SON AND GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

*From Bishop Robert, and all at
St Patrick's Cathedral - have a
wonderful, joy filled Christmas!*



Over the last four or so weeks we have journeyed together the path of the Advent season, a journey of preparation for Christ's advent in the flesh. Today, this all comes to a head as God's burning desire to be with us overflows, and never ceases to flow. This is the point of no return, at which eternity streams into time, and infinity into what is small and broken. Today creator becomes creature so that creature might be drawn into the life of the creator. Today our tears become God's and God's gladness becomes our very own. As we celebrate over these days the great wedding feast of heaven and earth, let us not forget to peer through the festivity and cheer to the one whose cheer and festivity it is!

When the time had come
for him to be born,
he went forth like the bridegroom
from his bridal chamber,
embracing his bride,
holding her in his arms,
whom the gracious Mother
laid in a manger
among some animals
that were there at that time.

Men sang songs
and angels melodies
celebrating the marriage
of two such as these.

But God there in the manger
cried and moaned;
and these tears were jewels
the bride brought to the wedding.
The Mother gazed in sheer wonder
on such an exchange:
in God, man's weeping,
and in man, gladness,
to the one and the other
things usually so strange.

— St John of the Cross

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a blessed new year, Fr Tom.

As we come toward the end of another year, and our minds turn to 2020 we take the time to look back over the year and ponder the presence of our God. It's hard to believe I have been on this journey with you now for 18 months! Time just seems to fly by! As I look back I have a thankful heart for all your support, assistance and kindness along this journey. Some years ago my sister sent me a card that I kept in my diary – it was 1998, the year I was ordained a Deacon. It said, **"Look to this day for it is life; the very life of life. In its brief course lie all the realities and truths of existence – the joy of growth, the splendor of action, the glory of love. For yesterday is but memory and tomorrow is only a vision, but today well lived makes every yesterday a memory of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day"** May this season of joy open our hearts to the possibilities of every day of 2020. There will be many challenges, for that is life, just as there will be many moments of joy and love and wonderment. May we embrace the gift of every day that God gives to us, and as the message of Christmas echoes in our minds – BE NOT AFRAID FOR GOD-IS-WITH-US! - let us walk forward together in renewed hope. Father Hal, who enters the New Year recovering from a back injury passes on his best wishes for Christmas and New Year. I assured him that we will keep him in our prayers and thoughts.

Finally, thank you to the choir, young and old who have sung so beautifully at all our Christmas services and throughout the year. Thank you to Vicky for her gift with music, and thanks to Gabrielle Saide for her overall organisational skill in the sacristy and beyond. Thank you to the wonderful office staff we have here at St Pat's and thank you to all the faithful parishioners (that's you) who have been a beautiful presence in the community.

God's Blessings for the Christmas season and 2020, Fr. Michael and Sr. Rosie



Christmas Collection Appeal 2019

At the November Council of Priests meeting it was agreed that the most pressing area of concern for our diocese is the difficulties affecting people due to the ongoing drought situation. Even with widespread rain in the near future the 'turn around' will take many years to occur. With this situation in mind it was decided that half of the Christmas collection this year will be divided between CatholicCare and Drought Angels.

With the ongoing pressures involved in the challenge of farming during a drought, and the difficulties of rebuilding after rain, there is a continuing concern with regards to the mental health and wellbeing of people living in those affected areas. CatholicCare provides counselling and support services in the areas that are in dire need. The focus on this part of the Christmas Appeal will be related to supporting good mental and wellbeing outcomes for those people within our diocese.



Drought Angels were founded by Natasha Johnston and Nicki Blackwell of Chinchilla in 2014. They heard many stories of struggling families that were finding it hard to put food on the table. From there Drought Angels has grown into a fundraising group offering assistance to all those who are finding the drought time challenging and difficult. They provide a unique service offering "a listening ear, a warm hug and personalised support for families." They work through personal contact with farmers and have earned a "reputation for providing discreet and heartfelt assistance". They are able to help those who would not normally reach out but prefer to battle it alone, which can lead to severe depression and in some cases suicide. For more information go to: www.droughtangels.org.au

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND KINDNESS
TO ASSIST THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING AT THIS TIME.

Christmas Appeal 2018

Last year's appeal monies was sent to Sri Lanka to assist, in particular the widows in the northern part who lost their husbands and sons due to the war and conflict that had occurred in the district. Your generous gift has enabled them to initiate self help programs, which will generate an income for those who are unable to find work. This has been through the marketing of food items which are sold to their southern neighbors. This interaction also builds bridges with the two communities – Sinhalese and Tamils.

They are very appreciative of the kindness of the Toowoomba Diocese and are thankful for your generosity.

