

The local Catholic parish is having the following celebrations this Christmas:

Prayer of Commitment to Jesus Christ

*Jesus,
I am seeking more meaning in my life.
I seek happiness and peace for myself and my loved ones.
Up until now You have not played a big part in my life.
But little by little, as I look back over my life,
I can see You have been calling me to Yourself.
Through all the events and people that have come into my life
I can see Your presence, Your guiding hand through it all.
Help me not to be afraid as I resolve to learn more about
You and Your Church
and make You more of a part of my life.
Amen.*

Contacting the Catholic Enquiry Centre

If you or someone close to you is interested in finding out more about the Catholic faith, please contact Catholic Enquiry Centre on 1300 4 FAITH (1300 432 484) or email info@catholicenquiry.com or visit www.catholicenquiry.com

Other places you might like to look for information:

www.catholic.org.au
www.acbc.catholic.org.au
www.catholicaustralia.com.au
www.vatican.va



Christmas

Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ



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Reaching out in faith
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About Christmas

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a time for remembering God who came into the world as a human being, and brought the precious gift of new life.

For some the Christmas story will be familiar due to popular carols like Silent Night, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Joy to the World, Away in a Manger, and Little Drummer Boy. These are popular not only in churches, but also in homes, shopping centres and on radio during the festive season.

Films, too, tell different versions of the Christmas story, like *The Bells of St Mary's* (1945), *A Christmas Story* (1983), *The Nativity Story* (2006).

But what is the real story behind Christmas?



The birth of Jesus

Here is an account of Jesus' birth from Luke's Gospel*:

Now it happened that at this time Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be made of the whole inhabited world. This census – the first – took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria, and everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. So Joseph set out from the town of Nazareth in Galilee for Judaea, to David's town called Bethlehem, since he was of David's House and line, in order to be registered together with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

Now it happened that, while they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the living-space.

In the countryside close by there were shepherds out in the fields keeping guard over their sheep during the watches of the night. An angel of the Lord stood over them and the glory of the Lord shone round them.

They were terrified, but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid. Look, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. And here is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.'

And all at once with the angel there was a great throng of the hosts of heaven, praising God with the words:

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace for those He favours."

(Luke 2:1-14)

* Translation The New Jerusalem Bible, 1985.



Would you like to join in celebrating this Christmas?

If the first Christmas story touches you, and you would like to mark this Christmas in a special way by attending Mass, please know that you are very welcome.

You and your family might not be Catholic or have never been to a Mass before. You might be Catholic but not very active in the Church; it is great that you have come back.

Just listen and hear God speaking to you through the readings, the prayers and the homily (or teaching). Be present when, through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ that Catholics receive in Holy Communion.

Happy Christmas!

