

A Christmas Message from Bishop Michael. 2025

The Christmas liturgy makes good use of the symbolism of light. Candles and Christmas lights often light the way and the Star of Bethlehem is usually shining in a prominent place in the nativity scene. The scriptures that are read proclaim that a great light has entered the world. We remind ourselves that in the quiet darkness of Bethlehem, the Light of God shone forth in the face of a child, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary. We believe that he is the true Light who comes to dispel every shadow and to guide us his people toward hope, peace, and salvation.

This light is not overpowering but it gently and firmly invites us to follow. This light reassures us that God is not distant, but near—close to our pain, our questions, and our search for meaning. In a world often marked by the shadows of uncertainty, conflict, and fear, the birth of Christ reminds us that darkness never has the final word.

As we celebrate this holy Christmas season, we are called not only to just admire the light of Christ but to reflect it. As I travel through the Diocese it is always very inspiring to see the many ways people in our parishes care for one another and reach out to those in need. Each act of hospitality, kindness, and generosity allows Christ's light to shine through us, we become living candles, bearing Christ's presence into the world.

My prayer is that the light of the newborn Savior may shine brightly in your homes and families this year, bringing peace and hope. May that light strengthen our parishes and communities and may it lead us ever closer to Christ our saviour.

✠ Michael Dooley

Bishop of Dunedin