



### **Christmas Message from Fr Kerry Crowley (Diocesan Administrator)**

Joseph responded to the decree for a census issued by Caesar Augustus, travelling with his heavily pregnant wife Mary, from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Upon their arrival, the time came for Mary to give birth. The circumstances of that birth, are foundational for the newborn baby's identity.

***\*there was no room for them at the Inn***

***\*after birth, baby Jesus was laid in a manger***

***\*Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes***

The sign the angel gave to the shepherds to witness the birth of the saviour, Christ the Lord, is: ***"a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."***

Jesus was homeless at birth; no accommodation was available for his mother to give birth other than in a cave/stable on the outskirts of Bethlehem, the home of animals for protection from the elements in winter. After birth, the first and best sleeping place for baby Jesus was a rack used for food for animals. Once in the manger, to keep him warm, Mary wrapped him in what was available, pieces of cloth.

Here in lies the heart of the birth of the Christian Story.