



## 2023 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

### LOVE ALWAYS TRIUMPHS

The birth of Jesus, the Light of the World, always triumphs over the darkness.

The hope and light of the First Christmas in the Gospels is proclaimed from the darkness of the night. There is a star that guides. There is the joyful light that the shepherds, the Magi, and all creation encounter in the humble stable.

The surrounding "night" is not simply due to the fact of no sun. It is because there is no Son (of God) in the hearts of some. There are those who plot the killing of the Christ Child. Jesus himself is clothed in cloths and placed in a wooden crib – all suggesting a future death on Calvary. There is no hospitality for the "Prince of Peace" here.

This pattern continues even today.

There is the continuing darkness of the wars in Ukraine, the Holy Land, Africa and other places. Let us not forget that war is always a defeat for humanity – here darkness is chosen over the light of love and peace-making.

There is also the challenge in Australia of re-imagining our relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people after the defeat of the Voice Referendum.

Also, with the upward trend of the cost of living, this Christmas will be tough for so many to provide the necessities of table and shelter for their loved ones.

Yet, in the midst of these many darkneses, dawns the triumph of Divine Love found in the birth of the Son of God – Jesus, love itself.

Let us in silence and adoration invite this Christmas light, that chases away the long darkness of loneliness and isolation, to triumph in our hearts, our families and our communities!

Let Christmas joy have a practical expression in helping others. Please give generously to the Archbishop's Christmas Appeal. It will assist greatly places of need throughout the world.

Happy Christmas and New Year to all!

**Archbishop Christopher Prowse  
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn  
Christmas 2023**