



**Anglican Church
Diocese of Sydney
2023 Christmas Message**

The beginning of this year seemed to offer a ‘fresh start’ as we came out of COVID.

Yet, as 2023 unfolded, the cost of living rose beyond the means of many, we witnessed with grief and horror, man-made calamity in war and conflict, as well as natural disasters, tragic accidents, and terrible crimes.

What can we say when people come face to face with evil? How can we make sense of this desperate world? We need a word from God, which is exactly what Christmas is.

God has spoken through his Son, Jesus.

The Bible describes Jesus as the Word of God – he is God’s word to us in good times and in bad.

Rising costs may have forced a stripped-down Christmas this year yet when you strip away the tinsel you have the simple message of Christmas, so simple a child can believe and yet so substantial that its wonders and glories can fill our hearts and sustain us through life's challenges.

At its heart the message of Christmas is nothing other than Jesus, and nothing better than Jesus.

May I wish you and those you love a very happy Christmas.

Kanishka Raffel
Archbishop of Sydney
Christmas 2023