

**Sermon**  
**St Peter's Brighton Beach**  
**Christmas**  
**Midnight service**  
**'You are the light of the world'**

Five and a half years ago, ordering my first cup of coffee on Were Street, I asked the barista Derek what he enjoyed most about life here in Brighton Beach. Pointing down the street, with its beautiful trees, he told me, in his simple and understated way, smiling, 'Were Street. Its the most beautiful street in Melbourne.' This is true not least at Christmas time, as the trees are now adorned in their summer canopies, many with their red Christmas bows. To welcome the new born king.

Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them:  
Then shall all the trees of the wood shout with joy before the Lord.  
For he comes, he comes to judge the earth  
And the peoples with his truth.

The Christmas message is joy to the world, because it is about the truth. The truth that speaks to us more deeply, more profoundly, than the secular world can. To the truth about ourselves. To the truth about God. The truth that alone, can set us free.

As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols:  
It is the Lord who made the heavens.  
Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad:

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it.  
For he comes,  
To judge the world with righteousness  
And the peoples with his truth.

I had a dream this week. I was bound in a dark place. Then someone much more powerful than I, someone like God, began to take away the darkness. For the first time, I saw the light. For the first time, I was free.

The Christmas message is the message of the liberation of the world. The Christmas message is the message of the freedom of the human race.

For the people who walk in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who live in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.