

# A REASON FOR THE SEASON

By Bill Pugh

What makes Christmas?

For weeks the shops have been telling us. Shelves loaded with presents, toys for the children of every age. So much choice. "Not like that in my day" says Grandpa, "we were lucky to get anything in those days of the Depression and the war, kids don't know how lucky they are. Do they really appreciate it?"

Father Christmas look-a-likes galore. Puddings for sale, drinks. 'Order seafood now' says the sign. Car-ols and Christmas songs try to send their message over noisy shoppers. Breakups and parties at kinder, school and work.

In churches, choirs practise, ministers prepare sermons, maybe a Christmas tree for gifts for the needy. Christmas lights in windows of homes and streets feature colourful and creative displays. Plans to visit the Myer window with the children, and join the long queue to

follow the story for this year. Children prepare a list to prompt Santa to leave them their much wanted present.

Secret family discussions and whispers. What will I give so and so? And so it goes on.

But in all the busyness we must not lose sight of the reason for the season. It is so simple, yet pro-found. At that first Christmas long ago, the scene was a stable in an inn. Outside was a bright star, shepherds in the fields, angels singing in the heavens, three kings on their way to visit a baby so special, a promised king. So guided, there he was inside, warm and safe, with Mary and Joseph. They were a family, a very special family.

Christmas is above all family, ours, and the world family. Let us not forget this Christmas, those who have no home, food, warmth, shelter and means to celebrate Christmas as we do. How blessed we are.

## *Reflection:*

*Put a bowl on the table at Christmas dinner for the Christmas Bowl Appeal, as a reminder for each to add a thank you gift for the blessings of Christmas. And remember, holding hands, to say Grace, and praise God for sending his special gift of Jesus. For He is the reason for the season.*