

### **Thoughts on the Daily Word**

*Christmas Season. Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January. Holy Name of Jesus. Readings: 1 John 2:29-3:6; Psalm: 97; Gospel: John 1:29-34.*

Today's readings prepare us for both the Epiphany and the Baptism of Jesus. Today is also a celebration of the Holy Name of Jesus, a feast that is usually neglected because of the Christmas season. I always celebrate it because of my eight years of being Parish Priest of the parish of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, in Jesmond, Newcastle. It was, and is, a wonderful parish that taught me a lot. I always say that in those eight years I never heard a bad word spoken! It was one of the kindest and most caring communities that I had the privilege to serve. The readings that we have today represent the root of that community. A recognition of the value and worth of each human being. It was a diverse community with many people from all continents and backgrounds, representing the many who worked at or attended the local universities and hospitals. It was also a mixed community of the well to do and the working class. Very rich and very poor. Yet each person had a place and was valued. That is at the root of our Christmas journey of saints and sinners, wise men and shepherds. Being known by name, being called out and valued lies at the heart of our journey. It can be a hard road, ultimately it is the road of the cross, but it is the road that leads to life in its fulness.