



## **LEWISHAM HOSPITAL Sydney, Australia.**

*Sharing the glory, the  
wonder, the miracle of the  
holy season.*

Christmas has always had a special place in the Lewisham Hospital story. When the Hospital of the Holy Child opened in 1899, the Sisters wasted no time in planning a Christmas celebration, determined to bring joy to 'the dear little suffering ones of the Holy Child'. Support soon arrived from LCM in Rome. Mother Phillip, the Congregational Leader, sent a parcel of gifts, while many local women and doctors' wives quickly joined in, donating toys and gifts that ensured the young patients enjoyed a Christmas they would never forget.

This celebration quickly became an annual tradition. Each year, a Christmas tree was set up in the Outpatients Department, children wrote letters to Santa, and every patient received a small gift, often delivered by doctors who happily volunteered to dress up as Father Christmas.

By the 1930's the event had grown far beyond the hospital walls and had become a major community event. Hundreds of local children in need, many invited through St Vincent de Paul, poured through the hospital doors each year, sometimes numbering as many as 800 guests.

What began as a simple act of kindness blossomed into an enduring Lewisham tradition. Today, it is a reminder of the Sisters' joyful and loving service to God and God's people and a cherished part of the Lewisham Hospital story.