



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Merry Christmas!!!

The joy, the gift, the hope - the truth of the Child of God, born in time, as Savior of the world - speaks heart felt truths for all ages. Whatever year we were born on this earth, may the promise of the Child of God, born in time 2022 years ago, bring hope and promise to us this Christmas day.

This year we pray and trust that the crowds will return to public worship as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. May our families be free of COVID and other illnesses. ***Merry Christmas!!!***

In a Christmas card sent from the Archbishop of San Antonio, Texas, Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller writes, "May your heart be filled with the presence of Jesus this Christmas Season." On the cover of the card was a quote from Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. (Pope John Paul II beatified Teresa Benedicta of the Cross in 1987 and canonized her 12 years later.) She wrote, "Whoever really takes the Eucharist as his daily bread, experiences each day the mystery of Christmas, the Word made flesh." The card is one of many that I receive from friends and family, that I have kept on my desk for my reflection during the Advent season and the Christmas season that is now upon us. ***Merry Christmas!!!***

We put forth a great deal of time and energy, at times dealing with headaches and frustration, in our preparation for a joyous Christmas. We pray that there will be limited "explosions" throughout the Christmas season, throughout the festive gatherings where we spend time with loved ones and friends. May we find some time, claiming some "quiet time" this Christmas, to pause, to pray, to give thanks that God sent his Son Jesus, to be our redeemer. That God sent his Son Jesus to be the hope of the world. That God sent his son for every man or woman reading this article, on line, or with bulletin in hand, with dirty plates overflowing the kitchen sink and counters, or with plates cleaned and properly returned to the cabinet for the next holiday celebration. Christmas has arrived, Christ has been born, with joy we welcome again Jesus into our hearts. ***Merry Christmas!!!***

When we pray and reflect on the truth of Christmas, we realize a profound truth; the message of Christmas never changes, and neither does its beauty or power. As we share Christmas with others this coming week, what does the beauty and power of Christmas bring to our prayer, our families, our lived reality as God's children? Jesus' birth in a manger, is the stable foundation for us to grow in gratitude for God's blessings shared with humanity. When we celebrate the feasts of Christmas time, the Feast of the Holy Family, the Feast of Mary, Mother of God, the Feast of Epiphany, and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord we are nourished with God's Word and the gift of the Eucharist so we can be Christ to the world. May our attendance and participation in Mass, this Christmas season and coming year deepen the gift of faith in God's son. ***Merry Christmas!!!***

Thanks to Lake Forest Flowers and the Looby and Weber families for decorating the Church of St. Mary this year, continuing the wonderful and generous tradition that started in 1973. Thanks to all of the Parish Staff for their many extra efforts to allow our celebrations at Christmas deepen the gift of our faith. Thanks to the families, guests, and parishioners who financially support the Church of St. Mary, at Christmas time with a generous gift and throughout the year. ***Merry Christmas!!!***

May God bless us with hearts filled with the presence of Jesus this Christmas season,

Fr. Mike Macur