

Dear Parishioners,

This is my seventh Christmas Letter as Pastor of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish. No more than yourselves, I'm very fond of Christmas. Each year we revel in the feast of Christmas. No matter what our troubles, no matter what our natural disposition, Christmas brings the best out in us. During Christmas, the passion for celebration comes surging to the surface. People everywhere feel an irresistible urge to connect with their families. People who never write a line will actually write a letter or help someone in need. Why so?

I suspect it is because Christmas speaks to us in the very depths of our being. It comforts us, touches us, reassures in a way that resonates with our humanity. We come face to face with the central truth of the Christian faith-what we call the mystery of the Incarnation-that God came down, that God became man, that Jesus Christ is both God and man, that 'the word was made flesh and he lived among us.' God remained what he was and became what he was not. 'For a Son has been born for us, a Son has been given to us, and dominion has been laid on his shoulders; and this is the name he has been given, "Wonderful-Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

So on Christmas Day we send greetings to those who are sick or living alone. We think especially of people who have come home and welcome them, of our friends who are away and pray for them, of our dear ones who have died.

There is another thought I would like to put before you. Christmas offers a challenge to each one of us. The candles that we see in church remind us to be light-bearers- to bring the light of Christ to others. There may be areas of darkness in our hearts that the light of Christ doesn't really reach. It may be a habit or a negative attitude that dominated our lives in the past year. It may be an unhappy situation in the home for which we are mainly responsible. It may be a disagreement with a member of our family or a friend. It may be total indifference to the homeless and the poor whom Christ came and for whom as Christians we are expected to have a particular love. It's not enough to be sentimental towards a baby. We have to be sincere towards our Saviour as well. Feel challenged to make Christmas a more permanent thing.

Let's ask God together to forgive us and to help us to be more Christ-like. Let's make a resolution to live our Catholic faith more deeply, act more loving towards members of our families and be more generous in helping those who are sick, oppressed and lonely in our local community.

My prayer is that you will enjoy the special peace promised by the angels this Christmas.

Your brother in Christ...

Fr. Roy Farrell

A Christmas Blessing

May there be harmony in all your relationships. May sharp words, envious thoughts, and hostile feelings be dissolved.

May you give and receive love generously. May this love echo in your heart like the joy of church bells on a clear December day.

May each person who comes into your life be greeted as another Christ. May the honor given the Babe of Bethlehem be that which you extend to every guest who enters your presence.

May the hope of this sacred season settle in your soul. May it be a foundation of courage for you when time of distress occupy your inner land.

May the wonder and awe that fills the eyes of children be awakened with you. May it lead you to renewed awareness and appreciation of whatever you too easily take for granted.

May the bonds of love for one another be strengthened as you gather with your family and friends around the table of festivity and nourishment.

May you daily open the gift of your life and be grateful for the hidden treasures it contains.

May the coming year be one of good health for you. May you have energy and vitality. May you care well for your body, mind and spirit.

May you keep your eye on the Star within you and trust this Luminescent Presence to guide and direct you each day.

May you go often to the Bethlehem of your heart and visit the One who offers you peace. May you bring this peace into our world.

by Joyce Rupp



Let us pray for the sick members of our parish family...

Jordan Walker
Martin Foy
Rita Rowell
Mavis Soloman
Phyllis Devlins
Frank Kelly
Liz Law
Pam James
Hugh Kirby
Corey Price

Mike Campbell,
Rick McIntosh,
Martin Van Lierop
George Ferguson
Peter Ennamorato
Jacinta Belanger
Vincent Masci
Patrick Beaudoin
Raymond Daley
Veronika Liebenau
Ismeralda Pilling
John Baker
Del Chita
Debbie Howley
Helen Guerin

Maria Rosa Felices
Maria Wijaya
Alana Brown-Wallace
Victoria Ennamorato
Nancy Percy
A.J. & Rob Cesario
Pat Casey
Olivera Lambeta
Mike McCartney
Theresa VanBakel
Eva Maria Pracht
Jim Kehoe
Claudia Zalewski
Luigi Verre

Claire Hely
Anne, Vanessa &
Christine Allen
Anne-Marie Malek
Sheila Courtemanche
Luigi Verre
Claire Hely
Sheila Courtemanche
Mike Welgan
Marta Lou
Tony Colman
Maria Palmieri
Jon Fisher Jr.

...may God strengthen them in the midst of their suffering.

