

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

4:00 PM + Deacon Michael Gleason
r/o Gleason Family

7:00 PM + People of the Parish

9:00 PM + Blanca Toro
r/o Paula & Nelson Zumbana

Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

7:30 AM + Joseph Greco
r/o Marissa & Bob Greco

9:30 AM + Benito F. Fuertes
r/o Medenilla family

11:30 AM + Jante family
r/o Bautista family

Gospel

Lk 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her

to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

Please remember next week:

**The Solemnity of Mary the
Mother of God is a Holy Day of
Obligation on Wednesday,
January 1, 2025.
Masses are 12:10 & 7:00 PM**

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

May the Lord Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, bring to all of you the love of God with the gift of the peace proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those whom he favours" (*Lk 2:14*).

On this festive day, we turn our gaze to Bethlehem. The Lord comes to the world in a stable and is laid in a manger for animals, since his parents could find no room in the inn, even though the time had come for Mary to give birth. He comes among us in silence and in the dark of night, because the word of God needs no spotlights or loud human voices. He is himself the Word that gives life its meaning, he is the Light that brightens our path. "The true light, which enlightens everyone"- the Gospel tells us- "was coming into the world" (*Jn 1:9*).

Jesus is born in our midst; he is *God with us*. He comes to accompany our daily lives, to share with us in all things: our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears. He comes as a helpless child. He is born in the cold night, poor among the poor. In need of everything, he knocks at the door of our heart to find warmth and shelter.

Like the shepherds of Bethlehem, surrounded by light, may we set out to see the sign that God has given us. May we overcome our spiritual drowsiness and the shallow holiday glitter that makes us forget the One whose birth we are celebrating. Let us leave behind the hue and din that deadens our hearts and makes us spend more time in preparing decorations and gifts than in contemplating the great event: the Son of God born for us.

Brothers and sisters, let us turn our eyes to Bethlehem, and listen to the first faint cries of the Prince of Peace. For truly Jesus *is our peace*. The peace that the world cannot give, the peace that God the Father has bestowed on humanity by sending his Son into the world. Saint Leo the Great summed up the message of this day in a concise Latin phrase: *Nata/is Domini, nata/is est pacis*: "the Lord's birth is the birth of peace".

Jesus Christ is also *the way of peace*. By his incarnation, passion, death and resurrection, he has opened the way that leads from a world closed in on itself and oppressed by the dark shadows of enmity and war, to a world that is open and free to live in fraternity and peace. Brothers and sisters, let us follow that road! Yet in order to do so, to be able to walk behind Jesus, we must divest ourselves of the burdens that weigh us down and block our way.

What are those burdens? What is that dead weight? The same negative forces that prevented King Herod and his court from acknowledging and welcoming the birth of Jesus: attachment to power and money, pride, hypocrisy, falsehood. These forces hold us back from going to Bethlehem; they exclude us from the grace of Christmas and they block the entrance to the path of peace. If we want it to be Christmas, the Birth of Jesus and of peace, let us look to Bethlehem and contemplate the face of the Child who is born for us! And in that small and innocent face, let us see the faces of all those children who, everywhere in the world, long for peace.

Brothers and sisters, Bethlehem shows us the simplicity of God, who reveals himself not to the wise and the intelligent but to the little ones, to those with a pure and open heart (cf. *Mt 11:25*). Like the shepherds, let us too set out in haste and allow ourselves to be amazed by the unthinkable event of God who becomes man for our salvation. He, the source of all good, makes himself poor, asking as alms our own poor humanity. Let us allow ourselves to be deeply moved by the love of God. And let us follow Jesus, who stripped himself of his glory in order to give us a share in his fullness. -Message from, His Holiness Pope Francis, 2022

Blessed and Merry Christmas to you. May Jesus Christ, Our Saviour,
be life's sustaining gift to and for you... ALWAYS! -Love in Him, Fr. Jim

- Fr. Jim