



December 2024

Dear Friends,

I would like to share a letter with you that I wrote twenty- four years age. It still applies today.

As we begin to celebrate the Christmas season, we are united to Jesus Christ as we celebrate the Love of God in our families, our home, our world and in each of our lives. That is why this season is focused on God with us (in a time in history and in His Presence today in the Eucharist). *"I am the living bread come down from heaven"* Jn 6:51.

Many of your families have special Christmas traditions unique to your family, such as having an Advent wreath or day calendar at home, or as to which Christmas Mass you attend or when you start listening to Christmas carols. It is a shame that the Christmas season is so brief. We do not have the time to enjoy them all.

However, we do have plenty of time, all year in fact, to enjoy the whole purpose of the Advent/Christmas celebration. Jesus is the reason for the season. We have all heard of it and seen it displayed on Christmas cards. It reminds us that we keep Christmas alive all year by celebrating the Presence of the Lord (the Eucharist). The Eucharist is an extension of the Nativity of Jesus. God comes to us in the smallness in the incarnation and in the Eucharist. We are the reason for the season. We are the reason why the Eternal Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity was sent by the Father to take flesh through the Virgin Mary. God saw how mankind stumbled in the darkness of a pagan world with the glorification of materialism. He sees how we are still tempted to walk aimlessly in life. Jesus came and continues to each of our lives to give us light and *meaning*. *He is the "Light from Light, as the Prologue to the Gospel of call Him. The baby that was born that blessed night was the greatest of all gifts.* "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but have eternal life," Jn 3: 16. Jesus gave himself totally to us. We are the reason He suffered and died. He gave us a reason to live. We keep Christmas alive when we live the sacrificial love of the One who was born for us and who died for us.

Jesus in the Eucharist is the fulfillment of the promise of Emmanuel. "God with us." This year as we celebrate this past year of the Eucharist, we must not forget He is always present with us in the living bread come down from heaven."

This season we are giving out the book, **The Three Voices of God** by Matthew Kelly which will be at the church and the mission. Please use this book to focus on the reason of the season.

Finally, I would ask you this season if you can give a **special financial Christmas gift** of your individual means to the parish so that we can continue witnessing the mission of Jesus to all. It does make a difference.

*On behalf of myself and all the priests, deacons, and staff,
have joyful Advent and a blessed Christmas.*

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Kevin T. Schenning
Pastor