



ST. MARGARET
PARISH



December 2024

Dear Friends,

I would like to share a letter with you that I wrote twenty-four years ago. I believe it still applies today.

As we celebrate the Christmas season, we are united to Jesus Christ as we celebrate the love of God in our families, our homes, our world, and throughout our lives. That is why this season is focused on **God with us**—throughout history and in His Presence today in the Eucharist. *“I am the living bread come down from heaven”* John 6:51.

Many of you have special Christmas traditions unique to your families, 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 all these special traditions.

However, we do have plenty of time, all year in fact, to enjoy the true and complete purpose of the Advent and Christmas seasons. “Jesus is the reason for the season.” We have all heard it and seen it displayed on Christmas cards. It reminds us that we need to keep Christmas alive all year by celebrating the Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is an extension of the Nativity of Jesus. God comes to us in 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 Blessed 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 in each of our lives to give us light and meaning. He is the *“Light from Light,”* as the prologue to the Gospels 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,”* (John 3:16) Jesus gave himself to us—totally. We are the reason He suffered and died. He gave us a reason to live. We keep Christmas alive when we live through the sacrificial love of the one who was born, only to die for us.

Jesus in the Eucharist is the fulfillment of the promise of “Emmanuel, God with us.” This past year, we finished the **Year of the Eucharist**, but it is never really finished. We must not forget that He is always present with us in *“the living bread come down from heaven.”* In response to this, we are giving out a book called, **The Three Voices of God** by Matthew Kelly. They will be located at the doors at the Church and Mission. Please use this book to focus on the reason for the season.

Finally, I ask you this season, if you can give a **special financial Christmas gift** of your individual means to our Parish, it would make an enormous difference. This way, we can continue witnessing the mission of Jesus Christ to all in our community.

*On behalf of myself, all the Priests, Deacons, and Parish Staff,
have a joyful and blessed Christmas.*

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. Kevin T. Schenning
Pastor