

A Christmas poster featuring a baby Jesus in a manger under a starry night sky. The baby is lying in a wooden manger filled with straw, wearing a white cloth. A bright star shines in the sky above the manger. The background is a dark blue night sky with many small stars and a large, glowing star at the top. The text "Merry Christmas!" is written in a large, gold, cursive font. Below it, the text "AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "JOHN 1:14" is written in a white, sans-serif font. The overall scene is set against a dark blue night sky with many small stars and a large, glowing star at the top.

Merry Christmas!

AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH

JOHN 1:14



CHRISTMAS 2023

Dear Friends,

“Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth! I come to proclaim the Good News to you: tidings of great joy to be shared by the whole people.” (LK 2:10). That message of joy from heaven delivered on the night of Christ’s birth is echoed at Christmas celebrations everywhere: the glitter of festive atmospheres and the decorative lights of the Christmas trees, the exchange of gifts as an expression of good will and respect, the Christmas cards and greetings we send to wish other people happiness, the prayers that express longing for peace, all of that revitalizes the Christmas message of Joy. The joy we experience at Christmas is the joy only Christ can give. Without Jesus, it is hard to sing, “Joy to the World” even at Christmas because without Jesus our world is lifeless. Alexander Pope said it well, “What good is it that Christ is born in the millions of cribs in the world and does not find a place in our hearts?”

Amid joyful celebrations, however, we cannot forget either the harshness of the circumstances into which Jesus was born or the painful and tragic experiences of our world at this time. The world is still at war today. We continue to hear stories of people losing their jobs and homes. Many are affected by widespread natural calamities, economic crises and a continuing disregard and disrespect for life. People go through terrible experiences of fear, depression, anxiety, and grief.

What must we do? We must challenge ourselves and continue God’s work by making our contribution to the task of healing brokenness, by fostering peace and harmony in human relationships, by offering forgiveness to our offenders, tolerance to our opponents and by bringing a little light and joy into the darkness, confusion, and sadness of the world we know. We are born broken. We live constantly by mending our lives and Jesus is the glue to put us back together again. So let Christ be born in our hearts so that we can give the gift of Christ to others.

More than 2000 years ago, Jesus left His Father’s side, and he came as a gift to Mary and Joseph. They shared their gift with shepherds, Anna, Simeon, and all of Israel. Some accepted, some ignored, still others were belligerent. Jesus continues to give and live. He gave his life and returned to God. Through the followers, His gift continues to be shared.

We, the Parish Staff, Fr. Trey and I, will hold you and your family close to our hearts and in our prayers and Masses during this most holy season.

Our sincere wishes for A MERRY CHRISTMAS FILLED WITH JOY AND PEACE, AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR IN 2024!

Fr. Thomas Vellappallil, MS
Pastor



CHRISTMAS

— THE SAVIOR IS BORN —

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Throughout the holiday hustle and bustle, take a few moments to quietly reflect on the reason for this season. In a spirit of gratitude, let us give thanks to the Lord for entering into the world as an infant, and for Mary's courageous "yes." We welcome into our hearts the greatest gift of Christmas: our Savior, Jesus Christ.

A Christmas Prayer

God,
you became human through the obedience
of a simple young woman named Mary.

Mary is our model of faith.

May we be faithful to your word
as Mary was.

Give us the courage to face each day
with the yes that Mary gave to you.
We ask this through the incarnate God,
who comes to us again during this
Christmas season.

Amen.



Christmas Gifts- Why do we give them?

Great events in and of themselves are not tangible. They occur in life but leave no mark behind, nothing that someone could come across and know that something significant occurred. So we mark the event with monuments, holidays, gold watches or plaques, making a meaningful event tangible and memorable.

Gifts at Christmas do the same thing. They mark the occasion of the birth of Jesus, communicating a bit of the joy of the day by allowing us to be both giver and receiver. Gift-giving sets aside the day as special and different. The special foods, customs, decorations, and gifts all help focus our attention on the importance and meaning of the day and at the same time allow us to share personally in its joy and happiness.

In giving gifts, though, we can share in the meaning of Christmas in a significant way. We imitate God in sharing with others. We give a bit of ourselves to others in the gifts we give, just as God gives us the gift of his Son.

No wonder we often say that the best gifts are those that come from the heart.

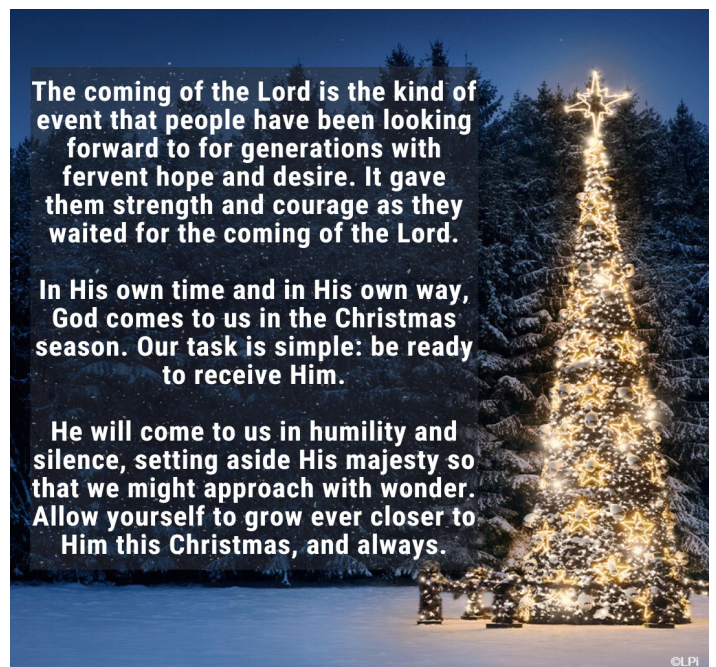
Given in love, these presents are wrapped in the best covering of all.

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The coming of the Lord is the kind of event that people have been looking forward to for generations with fervent hope and desire. It gave them strength and courage as they waited for the coming of the Lord.

In His own time and in His own way, God comes to us in the Christmas season. Our task is simple: be ready to receive Him.

He will come to us in humility and silence, setting aside His majesty so that we might approach with wonder. Allow yourself to grow ever closer to Him this Christmas, and always.



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COLOR

Read the Gospel of the week and color the image.

