*“NO JESUS - NO PEACE KNOW JESUS - KNOW PEACE”*

The Ackerman, Norris, Shattuck family greet you in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Today our 8 year old grandson, Dominic, asked me to go to "Breakfast with Santa Claus" at his elementary school. One of the activities was to write a letter to Santa. Dominic wrote that what he wanted was "World Peace." He told me that first you ask for that, and then you can ask for all of the other things you want!

I suspect that everyone wants world peace, but all too often on their own terms and their own definition of what that means. As we approach critical decisions with the impending presidential election, may we pray that a man is chosen who recalls the foundations of this nation, with the God of Peace: the Prince of Peace - the only Savior - who was sent, but not elected.

As our family grows in grace and age, it is inevitable that we grow in involvement. When you read Keith's section, you may be pleased to know that our three children have decided this year to give their "presents" to the Cottages rather than to each other. Jo and I are very proud of them.

**Bishop Keith and Jo** — The biggest event for us, according to our family, is that NaNa/Jo/Mama Jo/Aunt Jo/Joann turned 70! For her birthday we had a vintage firetruck, owned by a local Italian restaurant, come to our house. Although it would appear that the firetruck was brought in order to help extinguish 70 candles, it was really brought to bake and serve Pizza. It is a portable restaurant! In the midst of this fun, significant gifts were given, and all of us rejoiced. Jo continues to be active in numerous church activities at St. Timothy's Church in Fort Worth where Bp. Keith serves as vicar. The little church has grown a great deal, and a number of Ackerman activities have occurred there, too. Another spectacular time for Jo was our family trip from Texas to Colorado to spend vacation time with Rose's family (Jo's sister.). Another generation of Bevacqua/Bonacci family members enjoying each other! This year Jo moved the headquarters of the Parish Press, the publications company we own, to St. Timothy's. She produced a remarkable children's book this year, and is in the process of releasing a book by the Bishop of Fort Worth very soon. Obviously her happiest times are family related, surrounded by children and grandchildren who show her great love.

**Bp. Keith** continues to travel quite a bit, and in August spent a week in Russia, along with several other Anglican Bishops meeting the Metropolitan (in Moscow) and also the Patriarch of Russia. He continues to be involved in numerous International and National church activities and recently helped in founding and hosting an International Congress held in Fort Worth, attended by church leaders from numerous places around the world. One retinal surgery and one knee surgery later, he is doing well. This has also been a wonderful year to connect and reconnect with some family members - several whom we had not met before. For the family that is one of the greatest gifts of all this year. Ancestry .com is a great tool for generational tracking. Another incredible highlight was Bp. Keith co-leading a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with.....................Keith A. Ackerman. At every juncture the right hand knew what the left hand was doing - it was flawless and deeply moving. It was Keith's 4th time in the Holy Land.

**Keith** (44) has had a "banner year." Many of you are familiar with the work that he does in providing shelter, food and more permanent housing for the homeless. This year quite a few television and newspaper interviews have highlighted the ministry that he exercises among those for whom Jesus weeps. Sadly these are all too often the people who are not in the news. They are not a minority group, and are part of the invisible group who are so often simply, in the minds of many, "part of the landscape." On the Second Sunday of Advent, Keith preached his first sermon (at St. Timothy Church), having spoken to numerous groups in churches in the past, this was the first time in the pulpit. It was breath taking. Keith is a hero to his nieces and nephews who absolutely adore him. **Donna** has changed companies this year, and continues to excel in her chosen profession as a Project Manager. The irony is that as she worked her way through college when she worked for Home Depot. She's back at Home Depot — Corporate Office – and not gathering carts in the parking lot like Keith likes to tease!! This was a sad year for Keith and Donna as their special dog, Buddy died. Their passion and compassion for all of God's Creation is an inspiration to us.

**Renee** (43) is, like her siblings, a dynamo who, we think, rarely sleeps. Whether it is as Theatre Director (2016 - "West Side Story") or wife or mother, she is in the very middle of where the excitement is. She is also experiencing a joy that few teachers ever realize - having two former students as teachers in her Department!! **Ethan** continues to be an outstanding Shakespearian actor - moving closer to his goal to have performed in all of the Bard's works. His profession allows him to use his many talents.

We simply cannot believe that **Ellie** is now in Middle School, and at 11 is quite a beautiful young lady. She loves singing in the school choir, enjoys church camp and youth group, and she has even had a few stage appearances. **Dominic** is a dynamo, and at 8 years old is a type of "Renaissance boy." He loves Cub Scouts, Gymnastics, and after school activities with NaNa and PaPa. He had a wonderful time at church camp this summer. This Christmas all four will have the fun of going on a cruise with the family of Dominic's late Godmother, Laura - a wonderful young woman who continues to be missed.

What a year for **Lynne** (39) who graduated with a Master in Education Administration Degree this year - 4.0, while being wife, mother, teacher, administrator, and Scout Leader. She is now an SRI specialist in the Dallas Independent School District, where she trains, coaches and evaluates Pre K teachers in Head Start Programs. Dallas ISD has partnered with Head Start, Child Care Group, and Faith Based centers. She became a Daughter of the Holy Cross this year (her Dad is the National Chaplain) and went to the National Assembly in Illinois this year. She is also on the Flower Guild and serves as Sunday School Director, and in her free time.....! **Rob** has returned to Fidelity Investments, and is very active in their parish as is Lynne and the girls. He sings in the choir, is Vice President of St. James Brotherhood, helps a great deal at Camp Crucis, and along with Lynne forms the Mr. and Mrs. Girl Scout Cookie Parents team. Speaking of Girl Scout cookies, **Natalia** (8) sold 1000 boxes in 2015 and has set her goal for 1500 this year! Her other goal is to make certain that there are cookies in every one of the cottages that Keith is building for the homeless. Natalia is an incredible gymnast and is on the ASI team. She had her first meet on December 12 and was amazing. She also sings in the parish choir and is, as a third grader, on the Student Council. She is a phenomenal big sister, and really helps her little sister **Betty** who is now 3 1/2 and is the joy of her sister and cousins. She loves sleepovers at NaNa and PaPa's house, singing, dancing, dressing up, entertaining her family, and.....gymnastics!

We are truly blessed as a family, and we pray that you will, indeed, realize "the Peace of God which passeth all understanding" this year. Please enjoy every day of this Holy Season of Christmas - all Twelve Days - and please pray for the true Peace that can alone come from knowing Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

With love in Christ,

Bp. Keith, Keith and Donna Ackerman, Ethan, Renee, Ellie and Dominic Norris, Rob, Lynne, Natalia and Betty Shattuck