



*A Savior has been  
born for you who is  
Messiah and Lord*

## PASTOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS IN TIME OF A PANDEMIC

My dear Parishioners:

Christmas is all about joy, rejoicing, and gladness, and during this time, nothing is on our minds but to share this joy with family, friends, and loved ones. This is actually the good news of Christmas when we recall the story of the incarnation when God came to take away our sorrows and fill us with His divine and loving presence.

The beautiful Christmas decorations, the Christmas songs, the get-togethers, and Christmas parties, all go to show the feelings of joy and happiness that the infant Jesus brings to us at Christmas time and beyond.

This good news, however, is again for the second year in a row met with the daily news of a raging pandemic and the emerging new Omicron variant all forcing us again to change the way we do things, the way we worship and socialize. No doubt, this year's Christmas celebrations will again be different with fewer gatherings and get-togethers, maybe with our immediate family members and households, with lesser Christmas travels and Christmas parties.

One thing though that is very central and important as we celebrate Christmas at such a difficult time is to know that while the ways and forms of our usual Christmas gatherings and celebrations may change, the meaning and reason for the celebration and season does not change but remains the same. That is the **GOOD NEWS** of Christmas to know that our good God is never far away but is always near to us.

This is the reason for the four weeks of Advent when we wait in joyful hope for the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now the wait is all over and God's promise is fulfilled once again in our lives.

This is indeed the joy and happiness that Christmas brings to our doorsteps, to our families, our communities, and to our troubled world. Christmas time reminds us that despite our life struggles and trials, God has not abandoned us to our fate, but is very much with us at the incarnation, when the world took flesh and dwelt among us (**Jn 1:14**), in order that things may be well with us again.

This is the fulfillment of the promise God made to us long ago, that a child shall be born, and his name shall be called **EMMANUEL**, which means "God is with us". He is with us every step of the way as we continue to navigate these difficult times and as we continue to make our eternal journey to Him.

As we, therefore, share the same good news that was first announced in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago, though in a different form and manner this year, may that feeling of joy, happiness, and peace felt by the shepherds on that First Christmas night also fill our hearts and homes this Christmas season and always.

As the arrival of a new baby brings happy cheer and joy to every home, may the arrival of the infant Jesus this Christmas at such a difficult time also dispel the darkness of every sorrow and pain and give us that true peace of God this Christmas time and always. Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2022!

**-Father Gordian**

BISHOP OF HAMILTON

Christmas 2021



My dear friends,

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light: those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shone!”

Is. 9.2

The fact that we are now dealing with the Omicron variant of the pernicious COVID-19 virus is discouraging indeed. We have worked so hard to do what we can to “manage” the pandemic protocols, but the daily bad news of increased infections, after we thought we were getting ahead of things, makes it difficult to remain positive.

The scripture passages given to us by the Church in the daily readings during the Christmas season remind us over and over again that we are a people of HOPE – darkness does not overwhelm us. The powerful recounting of the Christmas story lifts us up out of darkness, sadness, and sorrow, and reminds us that God has given us a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. This announcement gladdens us and reassures us that the Lord is with us – especially in the darkest of nights. It is the blessing of Christmas!

*May the God of infinite goodness, who by the Incarnation of his Son has driven darkness from the world and by that glorious Birth has illumined this most holy night, drive far from you the darkness of death and illumine your hearts with the light of life!*

(From the solemn blessing of Midnight Mass)

Merry Christmas! Enjoy the season.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

+Douglas Crosby, OMI

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI

Bishop of Hamilton