

Merry Christmas – A Feast of Love

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I come to wish you a Merry Christmas. May the child Jesus Christ, the Savior, be born in our hearts and families and transform us to be more Christ like. God became man to reconcile man with God. God became man to make men children of God. Christmas is a sign of universal love and hope for salvation. All through Advent we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in a worthy manner. Let us open our hearts and lives to enthrone Him in our lives and live our lives in the light of His message of love and hope for salvation. Let us pray that we may have the conscience of Christ in all that we do and be a light to the world.

The first recorded date of the celebration of Christmas was on Dec. 25th in 336 AD during the time of Roman Emperor Constantine. A few years later, Pope Julius I officially declared that the birth of Jesus would be celebrated on Dec. 25th. And ever since that day, it is celebrated as Christmas. St. Francis of Assisi in the 12th century started the tradition of the crib and the Nativity scene in the Christmas celebration. It is all about the contemplation of how God loved humanity and how we need to invite Christ into our lives.

We know that we all love gifts on Christmas, but above all God is giving us a great gift of His Only Son, Jesus Christ, who would give us the salvation to humankind. What else do we need above salvation? God is the giver of all gifts. If we offer our reverence continuously, with ever increasing intensity, we will see and feel the presence of God today.

What is the purpose of celebrating Christmas, if not to experience the love of God in our lives. **Pope Alexander** said, “What does it profit me if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world and not in my heart”. Today we should use the full power of our soul to show God that we love Him more than anything in life. Make every day a new birth of Christ in our life and spread the message of peace everywhere.

Virgin Mary, our blessed Mother, by her example and intercession is with us because where Jesus is awaited, there Mary is. Immaculate Virgin Mary, our Mother, who said “YES” to the will of God is a model to us to say “YES” to Jesus Christ to be born in our hearts to dispel the darkness. **St. Augustine** said, “Wake up, O man, it was for you that God was made man. Let us joyfully celebrate the coming of our Salvation and redemption. Through him we have access to this grace in which we stand”. Keep Christ in Christmas. I wish and pray that you have a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rev. Dr. Louis Maram Reddy
Pastor, St. Mary's Church, Tomahawk, WI