



Diocese of Worcester  
Office of the Bishop  
49 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

Christmas 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As Advent gives way to Christmas, we find ourselves in a continued state of waiting, longing and expectation for a promised vaccine. How our world has changed in a year!

Last Christmas, none of us had heard of COVID-19. Since then our lives, jobs, recreation and worship have been shaped by it. COVID precautions have led to COVID-fatigue as we long for a return to normal life.

Anxious waiting and expectation for the vaccine marks and impacts our celebrations. Gatherings in church and at home will be smaller, travel truncated, carols fewer, precautions increased and parties cancelled.

But Christmas is not cancelled. Our way of celebrating has changed, but our reason for celebrating remains the same. While the world awaits the arrival of a vaccine, we celebrate the arrival of the world's Savior.

We hope for a vaccine that for a time will ward off illness and death. The Divine Savior whose birth we celebrate gives us resurrection and reunion. We pray the vaccine will restore normal life on earth. The grace Christ offers promises eternal life in Heaven.

For two millennia Christians throughout the world have celebrated Christ's birth. Many of these Christmases have been marked by famine, plagues and wars. Through those hardships and others, Christians have found in Christ the strength, hope and joy to persevere, endure and triumph over all of life's uncertainties.

As we wait for the vaccine to come, let us rejoice, give thanks and find peace in the Savior who has already come, defeated sin and death and will come again to share His definitive triumph of eternal life.

With every prayerful best wish for a Blessed and Merry Christmas, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
Bishop of Worcester