



Dear Teachers, Parents, and Students,

As we celebrate Christmas 2020, we do so in a very different manner than years past due to the pandemic. How our lives have changed since last March! We all continue to pray for the blessing of effective vaccines in the New Year.

Around the time of the shutdown in March, we celebrated the feast of the Annunciation (March 25), when the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived baby Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. Nine months later, on December 25, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, Our Lord. Doesn't it seem as if we have been waiting for salvation all these months? Doesn't it seem as if the world has been aching for healing and renewal in this time period? This was very much the attitude of the Jewish people who were waiting for the Messiah to come into the world. Mary herself must have been very anxious to see who her child would be, after having received the message of the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation. And we long for better days, for "salvation" from the pandemic and a return to normalcy.



The human race has survived many challenges across the centuries: plagues, wars, persecution, division, and so on. Yet, the human race and the Church live on and survive. The birth of Christ and his presence in our lives as "Emmanuel" reminds us that we are not alone in the challenges of life. Yet, He doesn't save us from the trials of life—but He does walk with us as we pray with Him and receive His sacraments regularly. Christmas means that God became one of us and shared in our humanity in all of its dimensions. He knows the pain and suffering of human beings, and he also knows the value and meaning of the sacrifices we make. This Christmas let us welcome His presence into our hearts and homes and ask Him to be with us as we journey from the darkness of the pandemic to joy and new life as we begin treatments, vaccines, and the restoration of our world, with His grace and blessings!

**-Father Zientarski, Pastor**