

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

As I sit here on New Year's Eve Day, I want to begin by wishing you all a very Merry and blessed Christmas! As Catholics, we continue the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child through the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, this year celebrated on January 10th.

I know that this past year has been very difficult for so many of us, I pray that as we celebrate our Saviors first coming in the world, we remember that we know the end of the story. We know that this child, whose birth we just celebrated, ultimately grows up, begins his ministry, ultimately is arrested and put to death, then he is raised from the dead! Jesus IS the one that we have been waiting for and he HAS conquered sin and darkness. All that we have been experiencing with COVID will come to an end and Jesus will be by our side every step of the way. Jesus is victorious! He will be victorious over COVID-19 as well and all the struggles that have come with it.

I also want to take a moment to wish you all a very blessed and holy New Year! One of my favorite celebrations is the feast of Mary, Mother of God, whom we celebrate on the first day of every New Year! To have our blessed Mother at our side as we embark into a new civil year helps remind us that we are not alone.

At Christmas we see that Jesus was born into a family. He was not alone. God could have chosen to have Jesus come into the world anyway that he wanted, but God chose to bring his Son into the world in a community, a family. Just as God did when he created Adam in the Garden and then his wife Eve. God created the first community at the very beginning. The word became flesh in a community. We are born into a community and are members on many different communities. We start the new year with our community and most specifically with Mary, the Mother of God.

Let us draw near to our blessed Mother Mary as we start the new year and may she lead us and guide every step of the way, especially when we when we feel that we are most alone. We are not ever alone! Let us also ask our Blessed Mother to draw each of you together in community with your Catholic Daughter Courts. While gathering might still offer some challenges, it is important to remember each other in prayer and in particular to reach out to our sisters that are alone and might need some extra care and attention.

May the new born Christ Child, Mary, the Mother of God and Holy St. Joseph be with each of you, your courts, your families, your parishes, your own very hearts in 2021 and may their example of community and family draw us closer together in each of our own particular communities and families.

In Unity and Charity,

Fr. James