IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Letter from the Pastor
January 26, 2020

Dear friends in the Lord,

On September 30 last year, on the memorial of St. Jerome, that wonderful 4th-century student and translator of Sacred Scripture, Pope Francis announced that, beginning this year, the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time would be celebrated as the "Sunday of the Word of God."

In the *Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass*, we are reminded of the role of the Word of God in the life of the Church:

> In the hearing of God's word, the Church is built up and grows, and in the signs of the liturgical celebration, God's wonderful past works in the history of salvation are presented anew as mysterious realities. God, in turn, makes use of the congregation of the faithful that celebrates the Liturgy in order that his word may speed on and be glorified, and that his name be exalted among the nations.

> Whenever, therefore, the Church, gathered by the Holy Spirit for liturgical celebration, announces and proclaims the word of God, she is aware of being a new people, in whom the covenant made in the past is perfected and fulfilled. Baptism and confirmation in the Spirit have made all of Christ's faithful into messengers of God's word, because of the grace of hearing they have received. They must therefore be the bearers of the same word in the Church and in the world, at least by the witness of their lives.

> The word of God proclaimed in the celebration of God's mysteries does not only address present conditions, but looks back to past events and forward to what is yet to come. Thus God's word shows us what we should hope for, with such a longing that, in this changing world, our hearts will be set on the place where our true joys lie (Preamble, 7).

As we observe this first Word of God Sunday, may the word of Christ dwell in us richly, as in all wisdom we teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in our hearts to God. (Cf. Colossians 3:16.)

Your brother in Christ's word and work,