

A Letter from your Pastor, Fr. Craig Lusk For the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Christmas, & Feast of the Holy Family

Dear Brothers & Sisters In Christ,

What a year this has been for all of us! COVID-19 has affected us spiritually, emotionally, and for some, the physical anguish of having the disease. Some of our own parishioners have lost loved ones to COVID-19. I have found this to be the most difficult year ever in pastoral ministry, and yet, in these final days of our beautiful Advent Season, Hope shines brightly on the body of Christ, the Church.

The Church, my brothers and sisters, is that ship with a steady rudder that continues to persevere through the severe storms and assaults of this world! In the beautiful words of St. Ambrose, "The Church's foundation is unshakable and firm against the assaults of the raging sea."

Be not afraid, a Savior has been born. The light shines in the darkness and will not be overcome by the evil one. For those who have prepared well for the Advent Season by waiting in joyful hope for the coming of the Christ Child, may your preparations of prayer, charity and Holy Mass bless you abundantly. For those who had the Advent Season pass them by, may your heartfelt celebration of the incarnation bless your Christmas, knowing that Jesus came for you! And, may the beautiful feast of the Holy Family strengthen each and every family of the Collaborative of St. Mary & St. John.



I have been committed, along with Fr. Joe, Deacon Ken, Deacon Mike and my staff, to make coming and celebrating Holy Mass and the Sacraments of the Church safe for all. We also have provided for additional opportunities for the more vulnerable among us to celebrate Mass with a reduced number of people.

For my brothers and sisters who are elderly, have pre-existing conditions that make them vulnerable, or are too frightened to attend Mass on the weekends, we have a great alternative setting of weekday Masses: Tuesdays at 4pm at St. Mary, Thursdays at 12-noon at St. John, and Fridays at 7:30am at St. Mary. I will keep these weekday Masses, as they are most meaningful and beneficial for the spiritual life of our parishioners. We will also continue to livestream each week for those who are not ready or able to return to Holy Mass at this time.

At Christmas, we are celebrating something radically new - an intervention of God in our history that makes all previous interpositions seem insignificant. God becomes incarnate and thus fills this created world with His majesty. Jesus is born to sanctify us and call us to live a righteous life. In our grateful response, we must reject those things that separate us from God's love.

Wishing each and everyone of you a truly Blessed Christmas. May you be that light shining in the darkness.

*In His love,
Fr. Craig*