

## **Merry Christmas!**

As Christians we have two great festivals above all other festivals: Christmas which marks the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ; and Holy Week which marks the institution of the Holy Mass, the suffering of Jesus, His death, and His resurrection. Holy Week is the more important festival, but Christmas I think is more fun. Today above all else we rejoice that God Himself has come to us lowly and frail human beings as one of us to rescue us from the power of sin and death. If this is not a reason for celebration, then nothing in heaven or earth is worth celebrating. So let us rejoice not only this day, but for the entirety of the Christmas Season, that God has visited His people.

To properly celebrate the birth of our savior takes the assistance of many people in our parish. I want to thank the men and women who helped to plan and set up the many decorations that currently adorn the church for this most holy day. A lot of hard work and skill went into preparing these decorations that lend such a festive atmosphere to our church.

The musicians and singers that have spent weeks and months preparing for this day also deserve our thanks. It is an ancient saying in the Church that singing counts as a prayer said twice. Thanks to the efforts of the parish choirs and musicians not only has our celebration been properly festive, but our celebration has also been a great prayer of joy and thanksgiving directed to God.

Another word of thanks goes out to all the ministers who serve the parish in various roles during the Mass. This includes the Lectors who proclaim the Word of God; the Eucharistic Ministers who assist in bringing the Body and Blood of our Lord to the people; the Ushers who directly assist the people of God in many different ways before, during, and after the Mass; and the Altar Servers who assist me and our guest priests during the Mass. Finally, I want to give a special word of thanks to the deacons of our parish who not only serve at the altar during the Mass, but also serve the people of parish in several ministries outside of the Mass.

May all of you and your families have a happy and holy Christmas!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff  
Pastor