

Pastor's Christmas Message 2024

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year! The Advent readings have been preparing God's people for the birth of his Son Jesus. He is Emmanuel born on Christmas Day. Emmanuel means 'God with us'. The world can rejoice and take comfort 'God is with us'. Emmanuel brings hope and light to the world.

May our families and parish be blessed in the light of Christmas Day and in the new year! The parish is slowly emerging from the necessary health precautions of the past number of years and once again grows strong and vibrant in faith. This past year 50 individuals and families have become new members of the parish 46 children have been baptized. One older youth and one adult are being instructed to be received into the faith in the new year.

Spiritual and temporal works of the parish are being performed. I thank all volunteers of the parish for helping build a faithful parish. A special thanks to all who visit and bring communion to the sick and keep them in prayer. The parish food pantry continues to provide assistance and works in collaboration with North End Harvest Market. The Catholic apostolate CHALICE is being generously supported helping orphan children in the world. Three significant winter clothing, medical, and educational drives have taken place for the Jamaica mission, First Nations on Manitoulin Island assisted by the Manitou Circle, and Neighbourhood Friends received help from the parish to clothe the homeless for the winter. With gratitude to God, the parish rose to the occasion raising significant funds for Fr. Locky's mission in Malawi. The Refugee Council reports the Mambo family are adjusting well to Canada and are now fully employed and will become independent in the new year. Thank you to all who made it possible for a family to begin a new life in Canada! The Catholic Women's League and the Knights of Columbus continue working hard serving the parish and community and provided a festive dinner in our new parish hall celebrating its restoration and renovation. And a new ministry is now offering a 12-step program for those struggling with addictions or unhealthy attachments. Also, the Liturgy Council, altar servers, eucharistic ministers, and lectors help bring life to the celebration of the Holy Mass.

As we celebrate the glory of Christmas and enter the new year let us be faithful to the mission of a Jesuit parish and keep in mind the universal preferences of the Society of Jesus. A mission that identifies the four apostolic preferences in which all Jesuit parishes, schools, colleges, and retreat houses seek to achieve. The four preferences call us to a deeper spiritual life rooted in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, to care for youth, to care for justice, and to care for creation. May God bless you and your families this Christmas. As we enter the New Year 2024 the parish will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the building of the church. A team is forming to help us celebrate the anniversary. The Most Rev. Bishop Douglas Crosbie, OMI has been invited to the anniversary and accepted the invitation to celebrate the Holy Mass on Saturday, August 10 @ 5 PM Mass. After the Mass Bishop Douglas will bless the hall and join the parish for supper in the newly named Joseph Hall.

Once again, I thank all of the parish for your faith, devotion, prayer, and generosity. I thank Brittany our new secretary, Angie business administrator, Pam youth director, Stan custodian, Grace Music director, and Barb assistant accounting office for their hard work building a beautiful parish. And to all those volunteers I have been unable to mention, you are known to God, for all that you do. May God grant you many graces. Emmanuel... God is with us.

Merry Christmas!

Fr. Vernon P. Boyd, SJ