

Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

As I write this letter the voices of Bing Crosby, Nat King Cole and Andy Williams are echoing in my head as this is the most wonderful time of the year. From Thanksgiving to New Year's Day there are a multitude of traditions that many of us enjoy. We might celebrate certain holidays at a particular family member's house. There are special meals to mark the important celebrations. A couple of the traditions I am looking forward to are Cabbage Roll night (remember I'm Polish) and Movie Night. Both nights involve my grandma's cooking. Cabbage Roll night is a night of friends and family having fun and sharing in a good meal. It's one of those events that brings people together that you may only see once a year. As good Poles, we love our cabbage rolls! Movie night is a family tradition with some friends when my grandma makes homemade pizza and we watch National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation. A classic! I hope this time of year is meaningful and special for you and your families.

Of course, the reason any of these traditions exist is Jesus Christ. All of the wonderful things we enjoy this time of year from the people to the gifts is because Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. Sometimes the greatest gifts in life are the smallest gifts. Baby Jesus, born in cold poverty with animals is the smallest yet greatest gift God has given to humanity. How important it is for us to accept this gift with joy, with love, and with faith.

Recognizing how blessed we are, our parish has wonderful efforts to help those less fortunate this Advent and Christmas season. For some, it is very difficult to put a present under the tree for their child. We try to help and we do help. Through your amazing generosity we are able to make Christmas truly special for so many people. What makes it special is that they are experiencing Jesus through you. The poverty of the Christ Child is recognized in aiding the poverty of others. How precious those traditions are as well, to always make sure the Advent and Christmas season includes helping our brothers and sisters.

As we move through the Advent Season in preparation for so many wonderful things, let's be sure to keep Jesus at the center of it all. Advent is a time of preparation. Not only for Christmas dinner but more importantly a time to prepare our hearts to welcome baby Jesus. We're on a journey to Bethlehem where together we will fall to our knees in adoration Emmanuel, God with us. Let's do so with hearts made pure and wide open to faith, hope and love.

A Blessed Advent to you all!

Blessings,

Rev. Aaron R. Laskiewicz

Parish Administrator