

# Christmas 2023



Dear Parishioners of St. Elizabeth,

**New Beginnings at Christmas:** As the mystique of Christmas is being wrapped around us like a warm blanket, our hearts begin to burst with joy. Who can resist the charm of our God being born as a baby? Suddenly we feel we can start all over again. We can hope again. Despite darkness and sadness, we can pick up the pieces. We may die many “deaths” in our lifetime, but new births are possible because of the birth of the one who gives birth to everyone and everything---Jesus Christ our Lord. Three simple Christmas thoughts I’d like to share with you.

**Incarnation---We are one with God:** Christmas means God becoming one with us. That nothing in life satisfies us fully is the clearest sign that our hearts are made for God, who alone can fulfill us completely. Christmas is the season for our deepest union with God in Jesus Christ. He is in us, with us, and around us. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus mingles with every breath we take, every effort we make, with every dream and desire, in all our longings and yearnings. We are merged with God because Jesus has entered our flesh and blood, invaded our soul and spirit, and captured our heart and imagination.

**Fellowship: We are one with others:** Christmas means that we human beings are irrevocably bound with each other. “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...” We celebrate the body-soul connection with every other human being in the world. Jesus has knit us together intimately as one human family. Christmas is the time to celebrate our union with one another, no matter what language, religion, nation, culture, race, or color we may belong to. We humans are stuck with each other to work out our destiny for peace and justice, love and service.

**Earthen Vessels: We are one with nature:** As the Incarnate God has entered history and the material world, we realize that we are earthen vessels, an integral part of nature. “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” Everything is infused with sacredness. The elements our bodies are composed of make up the larger material world. Christmas is the time to celebrate that God, the human family, and nature have been forever joined together. That is why we are to love, cherish, protect, and preserve the Planet Earth.

**Christmas Mass Schedule:** Christmas Eve Mass: 4:30 p.m. Christmas Day Masses: 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

**Thanking You and Wishing You:** This Christmas season, I wish everyone at St. Elizabeth Parish Community the celebration of our profound connection with God, others, and the world. I thank you for your faith and friendship, your stewardship and service. I look forward to your continued support for the ministries and projects of our parish now and in the New Year 2024. May the newborn baby Jesus smile on us and bless all that we are, all that we have, and all that we do!

**Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!**

Your Friend and Pastor,

Father Charles Puthota, Ph.D.

Pastor