

§ A Letter From Jesus Christ Concerning His Celebration >

Dear children,

It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season. Maybe you've forgotten that I wasn't actually born during this time of the year. It was some of your predecessors who decided to celebrate My birthday on what was actually a time of pagan festival. However, I do appreciate being remembered anytime.

How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth just, GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER. Now, having said that let Me go on.

If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting My birth, then just get rid of a couple of "Santas" and snowmen and put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all My followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town.

Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a holiday tree, instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can and may remember Me anytime you see any tree. Decorate a grapevine if you wish. Remember, I am the vine and you are my lovely branches. See John 15:1-8.

If you want to give Me a present in remembrance of My birth here is my wish list. Choose something from it.

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of year. I know, they tell Me all the time.

2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.

3. Instead of writing George complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out this year, why don't you write and tell him that you'll be praying for him and his family this year. Then follow up. It will be nice hearing from you again.

4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.

5. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.

6. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take his own life this season because he feels so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile. It could make the difference. Also, you might consider supporting the local Hot-Line: they talk with people like that every day.

7. Instead of nitpicking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas," that doesn't keep you from wishing them one. Then stop shopping there on Sunday. If the store didn't make so much money on that day they'd close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.

8. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary, especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name. You may already know someone like that.

9. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them (and I suspect you don't) buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Marines, the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in Me. They will make the delivery for you.

10. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

P.S Don't forget; I am God and can take care of Myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work. Time is short. I'll help you, it is up to you. And, do have a most blessed Christmas with all those you love and care about you and whom you love and should remember,

NEVER FORGET THAT I DO LOVE YOU



Stewardship Report: Revenue



Due to the advanced transmission of this bulletin before Christmas, the Stewardship Report information is not available and will be printed in the bulletin for January 4th.

NEW OFFERTORY ENVELOPES: For 2009, we are changing to a new offertory envelope distribution system. Instead of quarterly mailings, the entire year of envelopes will be distributed at once. The new annual packs of offertory envelopes for 2009 are now available. **THEY WILL NOT BE MAILED.** The change in distribution this year is a cost-cutting measure intended to save processing fees, postage and staff time throughout the coming year. Envelopes will be available to pick up during regular Rectory business hours and after regular Masses. Thank you for your assistance in this effort.

Christmas Gift/End of the Year Giving: Please take some time in these remaining days of Advent to consider prayerfully your Christmas gift to our parish. The Christmas collection is a very important part of our annual budget and we rely on the spirit of giving that reigns in this season to guide your hearts and thoughts as you decide what financial offering you can give to the Christ Child. One way to guide your thoughts and prayers is to look at the amount you will spend on the most cherished person(s) in your life...husband, wife, child(ren). Would it be possible to match that amount as a gift to the Christ Child?

Please also remember that all contributions to the weekly offertory, special collections, and the Forward in Faith Campaign are tax deductible. December 31st is quickly approaching! This date marks the end of the 2008 calendar year of charitable contributions for your tax returns this spring. We can only credit your annual financial contribution statement to the parish with gifts received up to and including December 31st. Please plan ahead so that your financial contribution statement will reflect a true spirit of stewardship and of joyfully returning to the Lord the blessings He has bestowed upon you this past year.

Annual End of Year Contribution Statements: During the next few weeks our business office will begin to prepare contribution statements for the year 2008 (for regular envelope users/Faith Direct contributors). The parish is not obligated under the law to send these statements but rather it is done as a courtesy to our parishioners in gratitude for their faithful sacrifices of treasure and to assist them as they prepare their 2008 tax return. Contribution statements will be mailed sometime toward the end of January or the beginning of February. Statements will only be mailed to parishioners who contributed more than \$250 to the parish over the past year. Others may request a statement, should you need one, from the business office. We strive for accuracy in our recordkeeping but occasionally through human or technical errors we may make mistakes. If there are discrepancies in your statement, please call Mrs. Leslie O'Leary in the business office. Your canceled checks will greatly assist us in correcting our records! Thank you to everyone who takes the time to use your offertory envelopes or Faith Direct and for your weekly sacrifice of treasure to our Lord.

Advent Coin Folders: For those who took an Advent Calendar this year, please don't forget to bring back your coins in a ziplock bag on Christmas day! Your gift of change will help us to continue to serve the needy in our parish and help them see the true gift of Christmas.

REMINDER: Please be sure the Rectory has your most current address on file. Year end statements will be mailed to the address we have in our database so please help us keep it as current as possible.

Crèche (Nativity Scene) Memorial Gifts:

Let us pray during the Christmas Season for these our benefactors and their intentions as you gaze upon the nativity scene of Our Lord, Jesus Christ:

New Stable Constructed and Donated by

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Adamczyk and Family
Father McKenna Council of the Knights of Columbus
Mother Seton Council of the Knights of Columbus

Baby Jesus Restoration

In memory of Giuseppe and Rosa Giglio
by Kimberly and Stephen Brown and Children

Saint Joseph Restoration

In memory of George O. Defayette
by his wife, Jane Defayette and his Sons

Blessed Virgin Mary Restoration

Given by Sol del Ande Eaton

Heraldic Angel Restoration

In memory of Msgr. John J. Scanlan
by the Faust Family

Shepherd with Child Restoration

In memory of the Scabis and Cmos Family
and the Gepert and Milczakowski Family
by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Scabis and
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Gepert

Shepherd with Lamb Restoration

In memory of William T. Hahne, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Stanley A. Ochenkowski and
Mr. and Mrs. William T. Hahne, Sr.
by Mrs. Teresa A. Hahne

Shepherd with Flute Restoration

In memory of John R. Jarus
by Janice Jarus

Nubian Wiseman Restoration

In memory of John and Mary Petruich
and John and Mary Pavel
by Richard and Gloria A. Pavel (both Deceased) and Children

Kneeling Wiseman Restoration

In memory of Abdon and Eufrosia Centeno
by Riz and Gali Galicinao and Children
and Amalia Spescha and Daughter

Standing Wiseman Restoration

Given by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rendon and Family

Camel Restoration

In memory of Eddie and Connie Lewis
by the Lewis and Isherwood Families

Camel Driver Restoration

In memory of Roland and Lucille LeSage
by Olin and Lorraine Dovel and Children

Donkey Restoration

In memory of Edwin J. & Irene B. Ruff
by Irene B. Ruff (Deceased)

Ox Restoration

In memory of Julius and Marian Gerhardt
by Carl (Deceased) and Dorothy Johnson

Dog Restoration

In memory of Robert J. Branigan
by Irene B. Ruff (Deceased)

Sheep Restoration

In memory of Mary Elizabeth Martin
In tribute to Daughters, Mary, Louise, Roberta & Margaret
by Therese Marie Hayden



Mass Intentions for the Octave of Christmas and Christmastide

Monday, December 29: Thomas Becket, bishop, martyr
Rectorcy & School Offices Closed

8:30 am Jose C. Manlapaz

Tuesday, December 30:

Rectorcy & School Offices Closed

8:30 am Clerene Celestine (lvg) & Kephren Andrews (lvg)

Wednesday, December 31: Sylvester I, pope

Rectorcy & School Offices Closed

8:30 am Mike Lapitsky

5:00 pm Josephine Clay

Thursday, January 1: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Rectorcy and School Offices Closed

This is a Holy Day of Obligation for All Catholics

10:00 am (ONLY) Anacleto Salomon

Friday, January 2: Basil the Great, bishop, doctor

Rectorcy Office Reopens at 8:00am

School Office Closed

8:30 am Dana Zehrbach

First Friday– Litany to the Sacred Heart of Jesus after Mass

Sat., January 3: Vigil– The Epiphany of the Lord

3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions

5:00 pm Bofua Muma Geh

Sunday, January 4: The Epiphany of the Lord

8:00 am Kathleen Brand

9:30 am Angelica De Leon

11:30am Mary Anne Collins

Please Pray for: †The Sick and Homebound In Our Parish:

Phil Ates; Virgie Azarcon; Ann Benson; Leslie Berkey; Barbara Brink; Margaret Carr; Fidel dela Cuesta; Eleanor DeMarco; Lisa Farland; Gali Galiciano; Francis Greenfield; Leslie Hand; Joseph Harrison; Charles Henry; Lena Jacobs; Fether Keene; Paula Kelly; Catherine Kipp; Robyn Kirby; Laura Elaine Kiessling; Ray Krok; Nancy Maimone; Joe Makowski; Willie (Bill) Moore; Bernadette Murphy; Larry Murphy; Rosemarie Nardozi; Mary Nelson; David Obi; Peter O'Neill; Alice Parker; Dawn Pearson; June Provini; Rohland Reich; Joe Sico; Walter Stewart; Marian Wahle; Margaret Zanin; Ryan Zawada †Names will be placed on our prayer list for three weeks. To add a name or to request continuing prayers, contact Tara Guevara by phone at 301-459-4814 or email tguevara@stmatthias.org.

Gloria, the Christmas Angel



Standing next to our antique nativity scene there is a special angel. Her name is **Gloria** and she holds a sack in her hands. Place a quarter in her sack (25 cents) and she will bow her head in thanks to the donor of the coin! This angel is the personal property of Father Jeff and is placed by the crèche especially for the children of the parish. **Please do not touch Gloria as she is very delicate and please do not place paper currency (bills) in her sack as this will damage the internal mechanism and prevent children from enjoying her presence.**