

FROM OUR PASTOR



We have arrived at the end of our Advent pilgrimage on this **FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT**. The Church celebrates the Lord's birth in proximity to the winter solstice. After His birth, the days start to become a little longer and thus it is at the beginning of the **SEASON OF CHRISTMAS**, or the beginning of the **SEASON OF "LIGHT ENTERING THE WORLD"** (John 1:5). For those of us living in the northern hemisphere, this gradual increase in daylight reflects the desired spiritual increase of the **"Light of Christ"** growing in our lives and is thus symbolically revealed in nature. It is my hope and prayer that as we all continue our



pilgrimage of faith, we will indeed reflect more of Christ's light in our world and dispel the shadows and darkness of sin to forever bask in the glow and warmth of Christ's light of truth.

To help others (and ourselves) in this quest, I want to once again challenge all of us to pause and seriously reflect, in a unique way, on what is going to take place in a few days. Of course we are going to gather in worship as a family of faith on Christmas and be reminded that the light of Christ has come into the world offering the tremendous blessings of His mercy, hope and love! We also know that, even in the midst of Covid-19 restrictions, the numbers of family members that will join us in worship will grow from what we have recently been accustomed to. Many will understandably make Mass an integral part of their Christmas celebrations. Despite all the challenges and difficulties, **we should all view our crowded Masses as our first Christmas gift!** A sincere greeting and warm welcome will go a long way for others to consider joining us for Sunday worship on a more regular basis. **Let us all also encourage one another** to take part in our parish's growing opportunities for fellowship and evangelization, service and worship either remotely (livestream, zoom, etc.) or in person. For example:

FELLOWSHIP & EVANGELIZATION: THAT-MAN-IS YOU PROGRAM for Men Saturday Mornings 7:30-8:30 a.m.
ALPHA: Discover the deeper meaning to life, Wednesday, January, 20th 7:00 p.m.
RUNNING & WALKING GROUPS Sat. Mornings 7am-Run; 8am-Walk

SERVICE: HUMAN CONCERNS: Numerous opportunities to serve.

WORSHIP: LITURGICAL MINISTERS: Ushers, Cantors, Lectors, Sanitizers, Altar Servers, etc.

VIRTUAL SETON LAKE RIDGE CHURCH TOUR, Sunday, January 3rd 3-4 p.m.

For more information on these and other opportunities please see the bulletin, our web-site www.setonlakeridge.org or our "Kiosks" located in the narthex. Let us remember, we are all on this **"journey of faith TOGETHER"**. May we all encourage and support one another as we seek to grow in becoming a more welcoming and embracing family of God.

~ Fr. Bashista

On behalf of Fr. Dort, Deacon Rob and our entire parish staff, I want to wish everyone a blessed and very Merry Christmas and a grace-filled New Year.

WEEKLY REFLECTION

Called to the Light

"God is light and in him there is no darkness," John writes in his first letter (1:5); and Paul writes that God "dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see" (1 Tim 6:16). The divine light enters the world and shines over all people when God becomes human. This is the great event in human history: The divine life, the perfect and unapproachable light, has left the bosom of divinity and become visible among us in the person of Jesus Christ. He has "called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pt 2:9). The fact that the light has come to you brings tangible consequences, but only if you truly receive it and let it light up your darkness. Living in Christ will let you stay close to him, and feel his light and warmth. Ever since the beginning, darkness and light have stood opposed. Darkness is exactly the denial and the disavowal of Christ. As light is the glow of the divine truth, so darkness is a terrible effort to suffocate the effects of the light. The scene of this struggle is the human soul. It is painful to realize that so much within us and around us seems to reject the light. The world has not received him, his own reject him and love the darkness more than the light. Nevertheless, we must believe in the insuperable power of the light. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (Jn 1:5).



This is the Day the Lord Has Made, © Liguori Publications www.liguori.org Used with Permission