



Merry Christmas!

As we enter the Christmas season, we recognize the incredible love of God, as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity enters our humanity! Throughout the years, the constant cry of Advent is "O Come, O Come Emmanuel!" The brokenness of our humanity – causing division in our relationship with God, with each other, with nature, and within ourselves – cries out for a Savior, for some way to heal these wounds and divisions. And God answered, not by sending an angel, or by a divine decree from on high, but by coming *Himself!*

This is the mystery of Christmas – that God Himself came to us, sharing in our humanity, in order to heal our wounds, to forgive our sins, to break the eternal power of death.

Take this message home with you. Remember it, not just in the joy of the Christmas Season, but each day of the year. When you're sick, when you're struggling with life, when you see evil all around you, look to this truth – that God entered this brokenness in order to bring order out of chaos, good out of evil, and life out of death.

In the words of the great Carol "O Holy Night"

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;
Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night when Christ was born.
O night, O holy night, O night divine.

We were pining in our sins, but with the coming of Christ, we finally feel our worth – you are worth every drop of blood of the God of the universe!

Every week (even every day), we enter into this mystery – God's humble love taking flesh – when we enter into the Mass. Here the mystery of the cave in Bethlehem, as well as His Cross and Resurrection, are brought to earth again. These mysteries, once held in time, and then raised to eternity, are now brought before us in the Mass, as we are taken out of time and space into the eternal worship of God in the Mass. The Angels and Saints are here crying out, "Glory to God in the highest," and "Holy, Holy, Holy"!!!

I invite you, if you have been away from Mass, come back. It's so good that you have come for Christmas. We're so glad you're here. But Jesus wants to become one with you at Mass all the time – not just at Christmas. We want you to know that you are welcome here. If you have some things that need to be worked out first, we'll be happy to work with you on the process.

I pray that this Christmas be a time of joy and peace for you and your loved ones.

-Fr. Von