

December 17, 2020



Greetings from Fr. Swamy Pothireddy. I hope and pray that my letter finds you in good health and happy life.

Advent is the time of preparation for the coming of our Lord Jesus into our hearts and homes at Christmas. Advent is a time to recall the cry of the early Christians: Maranatha! "Come Lord Jesus!" It has been a very difficult year for most of us because of COVID-19. It has been already 10 months since COVID started impacting our lives. We have been going through a lot of physical, spiritual, and emotional challenges since last March. But at the same time, we are blessed in so many ways by the Lord for which we need to be grateful and thankful. Hope at least some of you could come together for Thanksgiving Day celebration. Year 2020 has been a difficult and challenging year which we will never forget in our lifetime.

I am glad to say that I am able to continue to celebrate the Eucharist with the congregation every day and happy to see some of you at weekday Masses and at weekend Masses. Though I have not met most of you, I hold you all in my daily prayers especially during the Eucharist. I also hear that those who are not able to make it to church because of the pandemic, are able to watch Mass on TV or participate in Mass through live-streaming of our Sunday Mass at 10am. I encourage all of you to continue to do that and not to lose hope. We are all together in spirit during these difficult times. I hope and pray that soon things become normal and we will be able to come back to celebrate the Eucharist as a parish community. If you still don't feel comfortable coming to Mass and would like to receive the Holy Communion, please let us know and we can make arrangements to bring communion to your home.

Our Holy father, Pope Francis announced a Year of St. Joseph, in honor of the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal church. The year begins Dec. 8, 2020, and concludes on Dec.8, 2021, according to a decree authorized by the pope. The decree said that Pope Francis had established a Year of St. Joseph so that "every member of the faithful, following his example, may strengthen their life of faith daily in the complete fulfillment of God's will." So, let us try to pray to St. Joseph as frequently as possible during this special year and receive the blessings of God.

Once again, we come to this very special time of the year in which we celebrate and appreciate the birth of Jesus Christ. In this season, we do our best to reach out and be a blessing to our families, as well as others who mean a lot to us. Christ came on earth to reveal an extraordinary message, a message of love, hope, joy and peace. Christ asks us to have love for one another, to be reconciled to one another and to accept one another.

Jesus said: "I have come so that you may have life and have it more abundantly." Giving us life is the first purpose for which Jesus came into the world. The second purpose is that the life promised by Christ is a source of joy and hope. By His coming, the promise of our salvation has been achieved: we have been delivered from the slavery of sin. We are now children of God and we will therefore never wander in darkness but always in the source of Light: Jesus Christ Himself.

Each of us has been entrusted with a special gift, a sacred responsibility: to show others how the mystery of God is among us. We are called to go out into the world and share the message of God's love for all mankind.

My brothers and sisters let the joy of Christmas penetrate our hearts and souls, so we may change our lives to become peacemakers, love others as we love ourselves, and love God above all things. I express my gratitude for all you have been and done to Sacred Heart especially during this difficult time. I really appreciate your generosity and sacrifices you made during this time.

My gift to you is my prayer that God will continue to shower His peace, mercy, care and love upon you and your family; that you will be a beacon of hope to all those who are in your lives; that people will encounter Jesus, as the best gift of all, through you. Know of my prayers; please keep me in yours.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With love and prayers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Swamy Pothireddy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Fr. Swamy Pothireddy
(Pastor)