



OFFICE OF BISHOP MYRON J. COTTA, D.D.

December 21, 2021

Christmas Message 2021 - Bishop's December Reflection

My Dear People of God,

Wishing all of you a blessed Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with *grace and mercy*. As we continue our celebration throughout this liturgical season of Christmas, let us be mindful that God dwells with us: *Emmanuel- "God with us."*

Christ Jesus, Messiah and Emmanuel, has come into this world so that we might have a greater, more personal, relationship with him. God, the Father, desires that we accept his Gift of reconciliation, the Bread of Life, first found laying in a manger, and is now found laying on every altar in every Catholic church throughout the world.

For those who have been physically away from attending Mass due to the pandemic, or may have simply fallen away from the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance, now, during this Christmas Season, is the perfect time to come home and to renew your relationship with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and to reconnect with your parish community.

Just as the Infant Jesus was held in the arms of Mary and Joseph, and pressed close to their hearts, it is this heart-to-heart embrace that describes the type of relationship Jesus desires to have with us. It is an *genuine heart-to-heart* relationship that is needed as we move toward the New Year and anticipate its uncertainties.

During this *holy season*, let our relationship with Jesus grow as we attend the Christmas liturgies. It is at Mass where we gather to adore and encounter him in his Word and in the Eucharist. During this holy season, may we be filled with the wonder of his love - a love that has come to save us from darkness and the burden of sin. I encourage you to accept the invitation from the Lord to come home this Christmas Season and embrace him who awaits for you in the Eucharist!

Brothers and sisters, as we review 2021, we can say, without a doubt, that we have been through a lot! Now, let us pray that the Holy Spirit will renew us as we *take a breath* and enjoy this season of *wonder and peace*.

Christmas blessings to all!

Bishop Cotta