

# St. Francis of Assisi Church

P.O. Box 2610 Revelstoke, British Columbia V0E 2S0 – Phone (250) 837 2071

December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

My Dearly Beloved in Christ,

*“Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the Prophets, but in these last days, he has spoken to us by the Son.”* (Hebrews 1:1-2)

With deep joy and gratitude, I extend to you my prayerful best wishes for a Holy and Blessed Christmas.

This year, because of the Corona virus pandemic, we cannot gather at Church to celebrate as a community of Faith the birth of our Lord Jesus. But during this Advent Season, it is my prayer that each of you will find opportunities to reflect on your own faith and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Whatever our hearts and souls seem to desire, whether we realize it or not, they ultimately desire Jesus Himself. For this reason, we are filled with joy at Christmas to know that all that we hope for has been fulfilled in the person of the Christ Child.

During our current challenges and concerns, the everlasting love of God the Father is once again made manifest to us in His Divine gift to us of His Son, Jesus. With the angels in Bethlehem, our faith moves us to sing: ***“Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on earth!”*** We realize that true peace on earth flows from our recognition of and praise for God Who is wonderfully present in each of our lives.

Normally, Christmas has a way of bringing to Church individuals and families who, for various reasons, may not have been to Mass or the Sacraments for months or even years. But this year, due to the pandemic, sadly, we cannot celebrate together Christmas Mass in our Church as a community and families cannot gather at home either unless they are living in the same household. Because I am new to you as a Pastor, as you are to me, I was looking forward with excitement and anticipation to meeting many of you at Church this Christmas. However, unfortunately with the present restrictions, our expectations cannot be fulfilled this year. This is truly an unusual Christmas.

I understand that the isolation and anxiety of the modern world can be overwhelming. However, we must never lose our hope. I extend to all of you an open and grateful heart of welcome by sending you this pastoral letter and by reaching out to each one of you, especially those who are not able to leave your homes or cannot access our online Holy Masses. We must take care of one another as well as our own mental health. In this way, may we grow together in strength and grace to know and celebrate God's presence in our lives and His dominion over all things of this world. The Lord God cherishes you.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, bless you, your families and loved ones at this joyful and blessed time of hope and grace. May Mary and Joseph, the parents of the Child Jesus, always watch over you and our beloved St. Francis of Assisi, Our Lady of Lourdes, and St. John the Baptist's Parishes.

**May Christ abide in your hearts!**

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

Rev. 

Fr. Luan Vu

Pastor

**Note:** If you have email address and new phone number, please email or phone the parish office to update

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