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Welcome *home.*

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December 23, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Advent is nearly closed, and the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord is upon us. In addition, the hope of the new year follows closely behind. The church celebrates the birth of Christ near the winter solstice because the solstice as the longest night of the year represents the darkness of human sin and the birth of the light in the world. From now on, the daylight will begin to lengthen as a memorial to the growing light of Christ. This is the most foundational message of hope. No matter how deep the darkness around us appears to be the daylight will always come with the dawn. The story of God's saving action in human history is always on display in the scriptures and in our liturgical celebrations. The deepest reality that we encounter is the Living God who is always at work trying to save us.

In Christmas, we celebrate a birth of a miraculous child into the world. God the Father sends his Son into the world to live among fallen human beings. Aided by the sacred community of the family with Mary and Joseph. Jesus is given to us as a savior. If only for this moment all the tender mercy of God is displayed as he rests as an innocent baby in a manger - feeding trough. This small, vulnerable, and seemingly insignificant infant will one day change the whole world. It is undeniable that the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth have changed the whole world. This is plainly displayed through human history. A small religious sect from Palestine has grown to cover most of the world, and its founders are household names. None of this, however, is the real impact of the birth of Jesus. There are many famous people known the world over now, but none has claimed the astounding things that Jesus claimed. Jesus told his disciples and us through them to eat his flesh and drink his blood for eternal life. He claimed a special connection with the One God. Most of all, after his death, his closest friends saw him alive again.

They began to understand that his death at the hands of the romans was the fulfillment of all that the Lord had promised the people of Israel. He had died to remove the guilt of sin for the whole human race. He had returned to his Father to make room for us in the new paradise. This is the same babe that rests in the arms of Mary. This is the same God who rules over the whole cosmos right now. Our Lord Jesus has defeated sin and death. He is not afraid of the Coronavirus. He is not afraid of political unrest. He has already defeated all his enemies and they will not revolt against him. Let this Christmas celebration bring you hope. No misfortune or difficulty can tear us away from the Love of God in whom we have all been baptized.

Merry Christmas and may God bless you all,

Fr. Alex G. Gaudet  
Pastor of Christ the Redeemer