

REFLECTION

ADVENT 2019
Christmas

By **Catholic Apostolate Center** and
Catholic Volunteer Network

*"AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND MADE
HIS DWELLING AMONG US." JOHN 1:1-18*

Merry Christmas!

Today we rejoice in God's overwhelming love for us, expressed through his Son Jesus. In our Christmas Day Gospel, John writes, "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth."

The Advent Gospels (and our writers) have helped us prepare for this day! We have been encouraged through the words of the prophets, John the Baptist, and the angel Gabriel, who said – "Do not be afraid." God knows that we yearn to be free, and thus sends Christ into our midst. Through Christ we are once again invited into the "fulness of life" – where hope and joy are realities, not dreams.

Pope Francis tell us: "Christmas is joy."

What is the joy of Christmas? It is the joy of our encounter with Jesus Christ! There is plenty of manufactured joy that is fleeting, especially during the Christmas season. The joy that we experience in the love of Christ, though, is eternal. It is not simply happiness in a thing or a moment.

Our joy is the Good News of salvation in Christ, the Incarnate One, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Look at a scene of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. In that humble moment, God comes as an infant child for one reason and one reason only, for us to have the opportunity for salvation.

The rarely sung third verse of the Christmas carol, O Holy Night, reminds us of the joy and freedom that come from Jesus Christ:

Truly He taught us to love one another / His law is Love and His gospel is Peace / Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, / And in His name all oppression shall cease, / Sweet hymns of joy in grateful Chorus raise we / Let all within us praise His Holy name! / Christ is the Lord, then ever! ever praise we! / His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim! / His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!

Thank you for walking with us this Advent, and for sharing in our reflections, prayers, and service suggestions. We sincerely hope that faith-based service will continue to be a part of your life in the future. Merry Christmas, and a blessed New Year.

Sincerely,

Catholic Apostolate Center and **Catholic Volunteer Network**

Joy to the World!

