



A Christmas Message from
Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ
Superior General
The Josephites
St. Joseph's Society of the Sacred Heart
1200 Varnum Street NE
Washington, DC 20017
www.josephites.org

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Dear Friends,

During Advent, we prepared for the coming of Christ. For four weeks, the Sunday readings invited us to prepare, to watch, to wait and to anticipate.

Then, what happens.

The heavens explode in a starry night over Bethlehem. Choirs of angels sing to the glory of God in the highest and lowly shepherds are called to a special place near the savior. Rather than wrath and thunder, God comes to his people in soft steps of a journey home to Bethlehem and the quiet sounds around a new born baby.

I recently reflected on these soft steps and human sounds that God used to come into our lives. How can we connect with that blessed moment in Bethlehem? Can we help a neighbor in need, encourage a child, smile to a shopper or say a quiet prayer?

In these unusual, challenging times, we can get caught up in all the noise of the moment that sometimes feels overwhelming. However, these things are temporary and fleeting. Reality is the love that our God came into the world as a baby so that we could be redeemed and live with him in eternity.

In this Christmas season, we all, including the Josephites, are busy with many things preparing to celebrate the holy days and holidays. One gift that we can give to each other is the gift that came that first Christmas night, a welcome embrace, a visit to friend, a family huddled close and a prayer of praise to God.

This Christmas, we Josephites will pray for all of you, giving thanks for your support and encouragement. You are a gift to us each day and we are blessed by your presence in our lives.

May the true spirit of the season be in your hearts – as we celebrate that first Christmas night when heaven came close to humankind.

Wishing you a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with hope.

Bishop John H. Ricard
Superior General