



Happy Christmas 2021 and Happy New Year 2022

It is with gratitude to God that I write to you all **Dearly Beloved** as I often refer to you in my homily section of our Sunday bulletin. All of you—men, women, and children mean a lot to me. I am grateful to God for giving me this opportunity to serve and be part of the family of the Parishes of the Resurrection: St. Anne-Harrisville, St. Catherine-Ossineke, St. Gabriel-Black River and St. Raphael-Mikado.

For the past two years since Covid-19 hit every celebration of Christmas reminds me of how good the Lord God has been to us who are still alive. While many are gone before us marked with the sign of faith, we acknowledge God for the gift of life, sustenance, clothing, shelter, health, and each other. May God continue to help us and provide us with our bodily and spiritual needs. May our deceased brothers and sisters rest in peace, amen.

We are grateful to our Blessed Mother for accepting to be the mother of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ who assumed human flesh. As we celebrate Christmas, the coming of Jesus in human form offers us the opportunity to thank God for allowing himself to assume human flesh because in the flesh Jesus did many things for our own good and for our salvation. If Christ had not come in human form there could not have been any hope for the human person. First, by taking human form, Jesus who came as a baby makes us see and appreciate the dignity of our human flesh. That Jesus, who is God, assumed human form means that being human is an honourable thing. Second, in the flesh, Jesus suffered and by so doing he reassures us that when we suffer we should accept it because even Jesus who had the power to avoid suffering accepted it. Third, in the flesh Jesus died and by his death he makes us see and appreciate the fact that although we will die, we will rise with him who died in the flesh and rose to everlasting life. It is for these three reasons we are grateful to God for assuming human form by allowing himself to be born in the flesh by Mary his mother. Let us therefore see and appreciate the spiritual worth of our birth, our sufferings, our death, and hope of raising to new life because it is in the human flesh that Jesus himself suffered, died, and rose from the dead.

I use this opportunity to acknowledge all those who during the past year have come to the aid of the Church and our community with not just their resources but with their strength, knowledge, time, and attention. May God in his kindness bless and reward you all. Love the Church and do things for the Church! Love yourselves and take good care of the body God has given you!! Let us love each other as children of God!!! Happy Christmas 2021 and Happy New Year 2022!!!!

As we are about to begin a new year, kindly note that this year my Homily section will always be captioned: **Holy and Innocent Children of God**. The reason for this is because we have been striving to be Holy and Innocent. Since we cannot go on spiritual holiday or strike, let us continue to be faithful to God and love each other. Let us strive to be Holy and innocent always. Happy Christmas 2021 and Happy new Year 2022.

~ Fr. John William