



December 17, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

This Sunday, we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent, which means that Christmas, the feast of Christ's birth, is just a few days away. The Lord is indeed very near to us, and that is something we must remember and hold on to in faith in these difficult times.

Christmas, the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is not just another day in the church's calendar. In fact, this feast is of such great importance that the Church celebrates it for a whole week, which we call the Octave of Christmas. Octave refers to the eight days that make up the week-long celebration. In a special way this year, the unforgettable year of the pandemic, I am encouraging all of you to celebrate Christmas throughout the entire Octave, especially if you are unable or are choosing not to attend Christmas Mass in person because of the danger of the virus or for any other reason. Since each day in the Octave is a continuation of the celebration of Christmas, you may decide to attend Mass in person on one of those days rather than on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. **We are also planning to celebrate Vespers, or Evening Prayer, on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday after Christmas.** This simple service of song and prayer will take place at 6 p.m. on those days in the church. I am hoping that at least a small group will come to church in person to join in these services, and they will also be livestreamed at www.StAndrewParishLive.com so that those at home can join in the prayers as well. The texts are included in the Christmas worship aid booklet that has been prepared to enhance our participation in all of the liturgies of the Christmas Octave, whether in person at Church or safe at home via livestream. There is more information about using this booklet (which will also be available online and sent via ePost) elsewhere in today's bulletin.

I would also like to thank all who made their reservations for attending Christmas Masses in person at St. Andrew. I appreciate your cooperation. Please remember to bring your reservation confirmation to Church when you come as it must be presented for admission. I am sorry that we have to limit attendance in this way, but we are obliged to enforce social distancing by limiting the number of people in the church. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

We are certainly celebrating Christmas very differently this year, but I do wish all of you the peace and hope of Christ, the comfort and joy of the Holy Spirit, and a very Merry Christmas!

Your Pastor,
Msgr. Stephan Moloney