



January 7, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which marks the end of the Christmas season according to the Church's liturgical calendar. Ordinary Time begins Monday, which will continue until Ash Wednesday. As the season of Christmas closes, I would like to reflect on Christmas 2020 here at St. Andrew Parish in this most unusual year.

First of all, I want to thank all who helped plan, prepare, and execute our liturgical celebrations for Christmas and the Octave. I am especially grateful to the members of the Liturgy Committee who set up the reservation system we used to control the in-person attendance at our Christmas Masses and ensure that they would not be overcrowded. The system worked well, and our ushers and volunteers helped those attending find their seats. Because of the snow, cold temperatures and hazardous driving conditions, attendance on Christmas Eve was less than expected. Using our new livestream camera system, we were able to virtually share all Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses, as well as daily masses and Vespers (Evening Prayer) during the Octave. I was pleased with the Vespers services, and although attendance was small, those who attended enjoyed a peaceful and prayerful experience. There were a number of people who joined in Vespers via livestream also. I want to thank those who helped with the livestream camera so as to bring our liturgies to those who are staying home. This has become an important way for St. Andrew parishioners to stay connected to their parish while for many it is necessary to avoid coming to church in person. I have also learned how to operate the livestream camera and got some practice doing so during the Christmas Octave!

Another success was the worship aid booklet that we used for all the Masses and Vespers of the Christmas Octave. This booklet helped us all to participate fully in these celebrations, whether in person or via livestream. Many thanks to Phil Lortz for his hard work on this and for providing music for all the Masses and services throughout the Christmas Octave. A huge Thank You goes to the volunteers who decorated the church so beautifully for Christmas, and to our maintenance staff for all the preparation, set-up, constant disinfecting and sanitizing, and snow removal.

Finally, let me thank you parishioners for your continuing support for St. Andrew Parish, for your peaceful and uncomplaining compliance with all the safety protocols and for your calm perseverance through this long ordeal. I thank you also for your expressions of support and concern for me and the clergy of St. Andrew, and for your encouraging Christmas greetings, cards, messages, gifts, goodies and other tokens of Christmas cheer. Thank you so much! May God bless you all and keep you safe!

Your Pastor,  
Msgr. Stephan Moloney