

✠ A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR ✠

**Yes Virginia, There IS a 5:00 P.M. Mass on Sunday**



Christmas Season 2015-2016 came and went but not before the *Catholic Daughters of the Americas*, after the 5:00 P.M. Saturday Mass celebrating the *Feast of the Lord's Baptism*, gathered over fifty people at Grover's Dock on the Nautical Mile in Freeport for "Christmas Caroling with cookies, cocoa, and coffee at the Creche in the cold". What a wonderful way to say goodbye to the Christmas Season. Please join me in thanking the *Catholic Daughters of the Americas*, and the friends of Our Holy Redeemer (the *Grovers*, the *Gallants*, *Les Endo*,

*Lee Sparaco*, and *John Talty*) who helped anyone and everyone passing by 175 Woodcleft Avenue to see what Christmas is all about throughout the entire Christmas Season!

The Spirit of Generosity that beautified 175 Woodcleft Avenue this past Christmas also transformed the absolutely beautiful church at 37 South Ocean Avenue. That Spirit moved many of our registered parishioners to fill their annual "Flower Offering" envelope with more than enough treasure for us to purchase red and white poinsettia plants that "(two nights) before Christmas when all through the (church)", Dianne and Bruce Wimbiscus, Joann Flaherty, Jane Dengel, Marlene Rangel, Judy Germaine, and Father Alessandro placed with Nativity statues in their proper perch. As we begin the Second Week in Ordinary Time, many of those plants can still be found gracing the church sanctuary: that preeminent place of prayer where we find closeness with God.



All of us long to feel that closeness with God! There are times when that feeling escapes us and we are tempted to lose faith, to lose trust in God's closeness. At these times we need to remain steadfast in faith, in the certainty of the truth and in full trust in God. We need to cry out and express our need for help and appeal to the other's faithfulness; "crying out means making an act of faith in God's closeness and in His willingness to listen" (cf. Benedict XVI, General Audience, 7 September 2011).



When that feeling of closeness of God escapes us, might I (with our Pope Emeritus) encourage you to turn to Mary as they did at Cana. "Mary" writes Benedict XVI, "shares in this closeness of God. Being in God and with God, she is close to each one of us, knows our hearts, can hear our prayers, can help us with her Motherly kindness, and has been given to us, as the Lord said, precisely as a "mother" to whom we can turn at every moment" (Benedict XVI, Homily, 15 August 2005): at a wedding/Cana; at a Birth/Christmas; at a 5:00 P.M. Mass on a Sunday during the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (8 December 2015 – 20 November 2016).