

## ✠ NOW A WORD FROM POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II ✠ AND A FEW INVITATIONS FROM OUR PASTOR

1. Today, on the Third Sunday of Advent, we hear again the joyful announcement, "*rejoice in the Lord always*" (Phil 4,4). They are words taken from the Letter of St Paul to the Philippians that sum up today's liturgy. The invitation to joy has a definite motive: "*the Lord is at hand*" (Phil 4,5). It is a truth known to the pious Israelite, and from it he drew confidence and consolation; it is a truth that has in Christ its perfected foundation. "*In him, in fact, God has drawn near to everyone*: He is the Messiah, the "Emmanuel", "God with us" (cf. Is 7,14; Mt 1,23). Joy is the heart of the Gospel of Christmas.

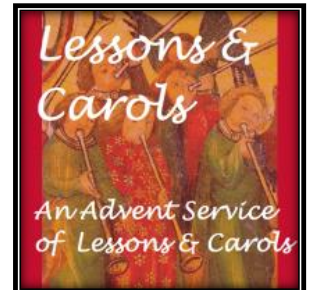
2. As an expert Mother, the Church knows better than any other institution the difficulties and sufferings that are part of the human condition. She knows well that in the life of many peoples and persons sadness prevails over joy, anxiety over hope. It is particularly *to these men and women that the Christmas message is proclaimed in a preferential way* because "[Christ] brought the good news of salvation to the poor, to prisoners freedom, and to those in sorrow joy" (Fourth Eucharistic Prayer). He is the *genuine liberator of the human person*, sent by God to redeem Him from the power of evil and death. *The joy* that Christ gives to His friends derives from this deep and integral liberation. It is a joy that, like *His peace*, is different from that of the world (cf. Jn 14,27) which is superficial and fleeting.

The serious problems surrounding human life sometimes make it difficult to recognize the gifts of Christ. The mission of the Church, that is coached by the Holy Spirit, is precisely that of making His gifts visible and of witnessing to their presence. Today humanity yearns especially for the gifts of joy and peace. It is our mission as believers, with the *eloquence of love expressed in deeds*, to become every day the prophetic ferment of a world reconciled by love and animated by divine joy.

3. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom we honour as the "Cause of our joy" help us to be faithful to this mission. Who more than she experienced the closeness of the Lord, source of joy and peace? We now entrust ourselves to her maternal protection in order to be at all times, but especially now, credible witnesses of the joy of Christ (Angelus, 16 December 2001).

### **The De La Salle School Advent Lessons and Carols** **Wednesday, 14 December at 2:00 P.M. in the church**

Mass-goers at Our Holy Redeemer, and in particular Friday 12:10 P.M. Mass-goers know how blessed Freeport, New York is to have the De La School at Our Holy Redeemer dwelling amongst us. The school's annual offering of Advent Lessons and Carols is just one of the ways that blessing takes flesh. Come home and see for yourself on Wednesday, 14 December at 2:00 P.M.! You won't be disappointed!



Please *come home* for  
**COFFEE WITH JESUS & BISHOP ANDRZEJ**  
**16 December 2016**  
11:00 A.M. in the Lower Church

Bishop Andrzej is also coming home for  
**AN ADVENT NIGHT OF RECOLLECTION**  
**20 December 2016**  
7:30 P.M. in the Church  
to help us prepare for the coming of Christmas  
and the coming of Christ.

***Please welcome him home!***