



COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS! COME HOME ON SUNDAY! COME HOME!

We wish you a Merry Christmas, We wish you a Merry Christmas, We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! That wish is extended to anyone and everyone who reads this message, but in a special way, it is offered to those readers who aren't planning to *come home* for the two Sundays of the Christmas Season: the *Feast of the Holy Family* (31 December) and the *Feast of the Epiphany/Little Christmas* (7 January). First and foremost, please know that I, and my fellow Priests and brother Deacons, along with the Religious and lay Staff of Our Holy Redeemer, and members of your own families, give thanks to God that you came home for Christmas. Your presence at Holy Mass makes our Parish family stronger, and helps that family to better provide for the Spiritual and material needs of anyone and everyone who comes home asking for assistance, while at the same time, maintaining a presence in Freeport that is *absolutely beautiful!* It is our prayer that you might answer the call from Our Holy Redeemer to *come home* on Sunday as well; every Sunday!



In his 2017 Christmas Message, Bishop Barres reflecting on that great Encyclical of Pope Saint John Paul II *Veritatis Splendour/The Splendour of Truth* writes: "moral choices and decisions that are grounded in objective truth transform and illuminate the lives of individuals and society." The first precept of the Church – to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation – as with all the precepts "are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by Pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbour" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church #2041-2042*).

If every Christmas Mass-goer was to recommit themselves to that "indispensable minimum" of attending Sunday Mass, not only would the new Life of Christ be **born within them**, as it was in the Blessed Virgin Mary, but that new Life of Christ as it was with Mary, would be **borne by them**. Within themselves they would experience the *dramatic missionary growth* of faith, hope, and charity, as well as joy, love, and peace that outside of themselves would become "good news of great joy that will be for all peoples" (Saint Luke II:10) transforming families, transforming churches, transforming workplaces, transforming schools; transforming the world!

Be not afraid said the angel of the Lord to Saint Joseph. *Be not afraid* said the Archangel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary. *Be not afraid* said the angel of the Lord to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks. And so I say unto you: "*Be not afraid to come home every Sunday and find the One Who makes coming home what it's all about not only at Christmas but every day of the year! Merry Christmas!*"

Please Come Home and join us for a (Three-Hour)

Holy Hour

as we pray for:

Life (9:00 P.M. -10:00 P.M.), Marriage (10:00 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.)

& Religious Liberty (11:00 P.M. - 12:00 A.M.)

Sunday, 31 December 2017 from 9:00 P.M. – 12:00 A.M. in the church

