

Christmas Eve Schedule

4:00 PM Vigil Mass (in the Church)

4:00 PM Vigil Mass (in the Parish Center)

6:00 PM Vigil Mass (preceded by Children's Choir)

10:00 PM Mass during the Night

Christmas Day Schedule

9:00 AM Mass at Dawn

11:00 AM Mass during the Day

On behalf of Father Santiago, Deacon Art, and myself, I wish all of you a most holy and blessed Christmas. May the Spirit of joy and peace at the birth of the Savior fill your lives on Christmas Day and throughout the coming year.

The mystery of Christmas is the mystery of the Incarnation: the mystery of the Word made Flesh. Saint John proclaims this mystery when he writes at the beginning of his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... *And the Word became flesh* and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 14).

The eternal Word of God—God—entered the world in which we live by taking on our human flesh. This means that Jesus Christ is true God and true Man. Jesus of Nazareth was a human being like us in every way except sin. He felt our emotion and pain; he felt our suffering and disappointment; he shared fully in our human nature. But Jesus was not merely a human being; he was the incarnate Son of God. To see Jesus, therefore, is to see God. To hear Jesus is to hear God. To be in Jesus' presence is to be in the presence of God.

The mystery of the Incarnation is so profound that we can never fully comprehend or understand it. This is why we celebrate Christmas over a period of several weeks rather than on a single day. It takes time to appreciate the mystery of Christmas. It takes time to grasp the enormity of God's gift. It takes time to reflect upon and enter into the mystery of Christmas.

For us who believe in the mystery of Christmas—the Incarnation—there is no room for doubt and despair. There is no room for pessimism. The world, in which we live, God’s good creation, has been sanctified and made holy by the appearance of God’s Son in the flesh.

Merry Christmas

Father Matera