



*The Angel said to them,
"A SAVIOR has been born for you
who is MESSIAH and LORD."*

Christmas 2020

Dear St. Leo Parishioners and all friends in the Hilton-Parma Area,

Grace and Peace to you and your families this Christmas season. Anticipating Christmas this year, my thoughts go back to a Christmas many years ago. It was during the Viet Nam War. All the parties agreed to a ceasefire beginning Christmas Eve and going through Christmas Day. The cease-fire held. It really made me wonder. Those who agreed to the ceasefire were Vietnamese Christians, Buddhists and Communists. Two of those groups did not believe in Christ or Christmas. It made me think of the Power of the Christmas season that even Communists and Buddhists would want peace on this Christian Holy Day.

The Power of Christmas is greater than anything we are living through. I know we are experiencing many difficulties right now. People are dying or sick from COVID. We have missed family gatherings and major life events, like graduations, and weddings. Our Thanksgivings were very quiet and maybe lonely. We face a very different Christmas season without parties, concerts and gatherings outside of our households. COVID has restricted us from face to face socializing and has touched almost every area of the lives we are now living. Restaurants and businesses are closed. People have lost their jobs. School children are experiencing anything but normal school activities. We work, attend Mass and go to school from home. We are always wearing a mask and being physically apart in public. We can't visit our sick and elderly in a hospital or nursing home. All this can really be a downer.

But Christmas is coming - the Power of Christmas is coming. The ability to transform who we are and how we see our world. Many years ago when that Power brought peace, if only for a few hours, that Power is with us now in the midst of all we may be experiencing. The reality of Jesus' birth is still with us. Jesus' love for us is overwhelming and unconditional. It's not stopped by wars or pandemics. It is always here for us. We celebrate it so powerfully at Christmas time. The Power of Christmas is with us now and always. We have learned to adapt to socializing, attending Mass & working on Zoom, Google Classroom & Facebook. We have come to enjoy traditional family evening dinners and even board games. We have found a new appreciation for family and friends. We do not take for granted good health. We look out for our neighbors. This is the Power of Christmas!

After the tree is decorated, do yourself a favor. Turn off all the lights except for the tree. Sit and be quiet. Those lights represent Christ illuminating our darkness. Experience the Power of Christmas and His love for us. My Christmas gift for you is to remember you and yours at all the Christmas Masses. Please remember St. Leo's in your prayers. Merry Christmas!

May the Power of Christmas be in your Hearts,

Fr. Joe

Rev. Dr. Joseph R. Catanise, Pastor

St. Leo the Great Church, 110 Old Hojack Lane, Hilton, NY 14468

Please see the back for
Christmas Mass
Schedule

Christmas Mass Schedule:

(Occupancy is limited. Please call the office to reserve your seat, 392-2710)

Eve: 3:00PM (*this Mass is also being Facebook Live Stream*)

<https://www.facebook.com/stleohilton>

5:00PM & 11:00PM

Day: 10:30 AM

Electronic Giving is available for your convenience.

GivePlus Text Phone Number: 844-929-1030 or visit our web-site: www.stleochurch.org
for Web Giving.

Please note that there is a new entrance to St. Leo Church, 110 Old Hojack Lane. The Lake Avenue Entrance is closed and does not lead to the Church parking lot.

Your support and prayers are appreciated.

Angel

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