



Dear Friends in Christ,

For some people, Christmas is often a very difficult time of year. While many people gather to be with their family, friends, and loved ones to share a meal and exchange gifts with one another, others experience certain difficulties during this season. Some might be dealing with certain illnesses or health issues, while others might be coping with the painful reality of the passing of a loved one, loneliness, certain sins, or personal struggles. All these things can cast a dark pall over what should be a festive time of year for us.

Although these experiences are painfully real, as Christians, we should never forget the main reason why we celebrate Christmas. Our Faith reminds us that Christmas is above all about the manifestation of God's love for all humanity - as it is personified in the infant child, Jesus. St. Leo I once beautifully remarked on this point when he wrote: *"Our Saviour, dearly-beloved, was born today: let us be glad. For there is no proper place for sadness, when we keep the birthday of the Life, which destroys the fear of mortality and brings to us the joy of promised eternity. No one is kept from sharing in this happiness. There is for all one common measure of joy, because as our Lord the destroyer of sin and death finds none free from charge, so He comes to free us all. Let the saint exult in that he draws near to victory. Let the sinner be glad in that he is invited to pardon. Let the gentile take courage in that he is called to life. For the Son of God in the fullness of time which the inscrutable depth of the Divine counsel has determined, has taken on him the nature of man, thereby to reconcile it to its Author: in order that the inventor of death, the devil, might be conquered through that (nature) which he had conquered."* In light of such beautiful words, I encourage everyone not to let anything take away or diminish from the joyfulness of this Christmas Season. We are never alone because Christ came into this world so that He might journey with us as we walk in this valley of tears.

On behalf of the entire pastoral team at Our Lady of the Airways Parish - Fr. Canisius Raj, Enza Lamberti and Johnathann Rajanayagam – I wish each of you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas. May the peace, love and tenderness of the Infant Child, Jesus, be upon you this Christmas Season and the coming New Year!

Pax Christi, *Fr. Thomas*