

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen
St Mary's, Inverness
Christmas 2018



Christmas Greetings and assurance of Prayers from all the Clergy and
the Daughters of Divine Love

Thank you for all your cards, messages, gifts, and so many kindnesses
and greetings. We appreciate you all – as always you are in our
thoughts and prayers.

Fr James, Fr Piotr, Fr Andrew, Deacon Dominic, Deacon Patrick,
Sister Mary Grace, Sr Bridget and Sr Joy



Dear brothers and sister, friends in our Lord Jesus,

We who are at St Mary's, here in Inverness, over the Christmas period probably know what the celebrations mean: God – is- with-us (Emmanuel). We believe that, however mysteriously, God entered our history, and that His Divine Creative energy, His Word, took human flesh and was born among us. God in all His immense power became as we are, being born to a young girl, Mary. The baby, Jesus, becomes in time our Christ, anointed by God's Spirit. He reclaims the human race by living and dying for it, and in His own power, raises us all with Him to a new and loving future, and the Spirit of God sustains us in Faith and leads us into Truth."God in Christ is reconciling the world to Himself".

That's a brief paraphrase of Christian faith, our Faith. In our Catholic Tradition we possess a gracious treasury of worship, of the songs of angels, the offerings of the poor, the gifts of the rich, shepherds and kings, wise men and simple folk. All strands of human society find a home within the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We are privileged and richly blessed with a loving and caring tradition.

We are all aware that our reputation has been besmirched over the years, and many have justly found repugnant the abuses and failures, the falsity and the concealment of the crimes and sins of a few. However the great good, the genuine love shown by dedicated priests and religious all round the world is oceanic in its expanse. Beyond the seas throughout the world the Gospel has been proclaimed not just by words but by consecrated living and exemplary lives- the vast majority of the faithful know this in their hearts even when we grieve for the damage caused by a minority.

Yet take heart, we are a gifted people having the Living Word and Sacraments to provide 'the means of grace and the hope of glory.' By our welcoming and inclusive generosity may we be so attractive and persuasive that others will be enabled to share with us 'Our Common Life in the Body of Christ'- God with us, Emmanuel.

In this Christmas season I wish you all the blessing of a resurgent confidence, which, with persevering Faith, will enable us to show loving kindness to each other, and through us to those beyond our immediate community of Faith.

Let us share together in the Blessings of this Holy Season, singing the Lord's song 'Peace on earth' and 'Glory to God in the highest'.

All good wishes,

Fr James



Christmas Trees come in different guises

