



Fr. Tom Manjaly, SAC

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Beloved people of God,

It's my great desire to communicate with you from time to time, to share with you my thoughts and concerns about our parish life. As I am near the end of my third month as your pastor, I thought it would be a good time to send my first letter. From the outset let me express my deep gratitude for the fact that you have made me feel wanted, loved and accepted within such a short time. Many of my initial fears and apprehensions of working in a foreign land are disappearing. I appreciate your generosity and openness.

The coming few months are full of great events.

1. Season of Advent and Christmas.

The Advent Season begins on December 2 which is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is certainly a time of joyful anticipation of Christ's birth. It is only in the shadow of a sincere Advent preparation that the miracle of Christmas can be fully experienced. Today, avoiding the commercialization of Christmas is a real challenge. For Catholics, the liturgical season of Advent helps us to focus on the spiritual preparation for Christmas and on the coming of Our Lord. Let me encourage you during this time to make an Advent wreath, read sacred Scripture, take time for confession, and give of yourself by doing good works.

2. New Year and the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God

Please consider attending Mass on New Year's Day in order to express your gratitude to God and entrust to him the New Year. Make this a priority on your schedule for the day. Let us remember that January 1 is also the Feast of Mary the Mother of God and is a Holy Day of Obligation.

3. Parish Feast.

This year the Parish Feast will be on January 20. I would like to make it a memorable celebration. On this occasion I feel it is appropriate to learn more about our patron, St. Vincent Pallotti. Hence, on January 18, in preparation for the feast, we will have an evening Holy Mass, which will be followed by a video show on the life of St. Vincent. Snacks and refreshments will be served. On Saturday the 19th, we will have the regular evening Mass which will focus on the theme of St. Vincent Pallotti. On Sunday the 20th, we will have the Parish Feast Celebration. I hope to see all of you on these occasions.

In addition to these major events, we also have a number of other activities coming up during this time: **1) The Feast of the Immaculate Conception** on December 8 is a Holy Day of Obligation, **2) The Choir Cookie Sale** (Dec.8-9), **3) The Christmas Novena** in the East Church (Dec. 16-24), **4) The Volunteer party** on January 6, **5) A special blessing of the children** who were baptized this year (on Jan.13), **6) Catholic Schools Week** (Jan 27- Feb.1), and **7) A Wedding Anniversary Blessing** on February 17. I hope to see your active participation in these meaningful events.

I will also be working with the Pastoral Council and the parish commissions on some initiatives in the near future. We plan to do both a census of the parish, and a separate talent and service commitment survey. I also have in mind some faith renewal programs. I am very impressed by what I see in our parish, especially the many committees and volunteers who work selflessly for the parish. I also acknowledge the efficient work our parish staff is doing behind the scenes.

I value your presence and all you do for the parish. Your generosity with your time, talent and treasure is indispensable for the growth of our parish. I appreciate your valuable suggestions for the betterment of our parish life. Together let us make our parish a home where all feel loved, cared for and above all, where all can come to be nourished by God's love and mercy.

Finally, as I sign off for the time being, I wish you all the happiest Christmas ever and a bright New Year.

God bless you,



Fr. Thomas Manjaly, SAC.