



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church
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Reverend Monsignor Joseph DeGrocco
Pastor

Christmas, 2013

Dear Friends and Fellow Parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish,

GRACE, PEACE AND BLESSINGS TO YOU ON THIS HOLY FEAST OF CHRISTMAS! It is my pleasure as your Pastor to wish you and yours, in the name of all the Priests, Deacons, and the entire Pastoral Staff, an abundance of grace and joy this Christmas. To family and friends of our parishioners who are visiting us from other parishes, I offer greetings of hospitality and want you to know we are thrilled to have you with us. In addition, I extend a special greeting of “*Welcome home*” to students who are away at school who have returned home for the Christmas holiday.

The Prayer after Communion for Christmas Mass during the Night (Midnight Mass) has these beautiful words: “*Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, that we, who are gladdened by participation in the feast of our Redeemer’s Nativity, may through an honorable way of life become worthy of union with him. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.*”

That prayer expresses the reason that we come to Mass at Christmas and the reason to participate at Mass every Sunday: so that we might be united with Jesus by the way we live our life. Our world is so desperately in need of good people who live good, moral lives and who, in their compassion and love, enflesh for us the presence of Jesus Christ in the world. Just as God took flesh in Jesus, so are we to enflesh Jesus in the world today.

At OLPH, we take seriously that enfleshing Christ is what we have to be about all the time, “24-7,” as they say. Our parish is filled with so many wonderful people who offer themselves so generously out of their love for Christ and their love for one another. The past year has been one of growth and excitement at OLPH as we have added several different ministries, have enhanced our liturgical life together, and have continued to respond to the needs of the poor and most vulnerable among us. Through it all we have sought to strengthen our communal life **together** as brothers and sisters in the one Body of Christ, united in a common purpose of bringing the Gospel to everyone.

If you are someone who is with us at Mass on only one or two occasions throughout the year, please accept my heartfelt invitation to come to Mass weekly and share with us in the blessings that are so lavishly bestowed on us by God in the celebration of the Eucharist. I think you will find that the weekly anchor of celebrating Mass with us provides a foundation of holiness and closeness to God with which nothing else can compare!

However, whether you are with us every week or only occasionally, know that no matter what we are here to serve you. You can always find out what’s going on at OLPH by consulting our website at www.olphlindenhurst.org to read up on the latest events and to find the weekly bulletin.

May these days of Christmas Time bring you much joy and peace and bring you closer to our Risen Lord Jesus, who came among us so that we might be saved! Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,

Reverend Monsignor Joseph DeGrocco
Pastor