

To be read at all Christmas Masses or printed in the parish bulletin.



Christmas 2024

“When the kindness and generous love of God our Savior appeared...He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might... become heirs in hope of eternal life.” (Titus 3:4-7)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

At our Mass at dawn on Christmas Day, we will hear St. Paul speak to Titus about the gift of God’s boundless mercy bringing us the hope of eternal life through Jesus. By virtue of our rebirth in Baptism, we have become *“heirs in hope of eternal life.”*

Pope Francis has declared 2025 the *Jubilee Year of Hope*. What better way to prepare for the Holy Year than by making this Sacred Season a prime time to being especially attentive to all the hints of hope that are on display for you and me to embrace as we meet the challenges of the day. The Holy Father reminds us that, as followers of Jesus and members of His Body, the Church, we are called to be pilgrims of hope and builders of peace. How much our world this Christmas needs the truth of the Gospel and the witness of hope-filled disciples.

No celebration throughout the year has so many songs dedicated to it as Christmas. Yes, this is a time for singing because ours is the God of all hopefulness. As St. John of the Cross would tell us, where there was little love, God put love. That is, through the birth of Jesus Christ, Love Incarnate has redeemed the world with His merciful love. Is there a greater cause for hope and celebration?

The person who has hope lives differently. Let’s make a determined effort to see the signs of hope of eternal life all around us. Hope-filled, let’s be a source of encouragement and blessed hope for those carrying heavy burdens at this time of the year. Christ-led and Christ-fed, we are hope-filled!

May the Christ Child bring you and your family the Gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope and the Promise of Peace. A blessed Christmas and hope-filled New Year!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry R. LaValley".

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg