

Dear Members of Sacred Heart Church,

With joy and gratitude we bring this wonderful Christmas Season to a prayerful conclusion. On Christmas we celebrated the wondrous birth of Jesus, and then we honored the Holy Family. We began the New Year by rejoicing in the Motherhood of Mary and her example of humility and holiness. We journeyed with the Magi to Bethlehem trusting in the glorious Light of God and, finally, this Sunday we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. So many manifestations of God's presence, so many revelations of His abiding Love. Truly, He is Emmanuel. Truly, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory,"

The Antiphon for the Epiphany Morning Prayer Canticle proclaims:

"Today, the Bridegroom claims his bride, the Church, since Christ has washed her sins away in Jordan's waters; the Magi hasten with their gifts to the royal wedding; and the wedding guests rejoice, for Christ has changed water into wine, alleluia."

We have, with great devotion, gathered with Mary to honor her new-born Son, with the Wise Men to worship the new-born King, and with John the Baptist to welcome the Beloved Son of God. Now, we are sent forth into the New Year and this troubled world to witness to the miracles and mighty works He has done for us, not only changing water into wine, but, more importantly, changing bread and wine into His Body and Blood and changing us from sinners to beloved children of our Heavenly Father through the waters of Baptism. In very human ways, let us be signs of His Divine Love and bearers of His Holy Spirit in the days ahead. Our Psalm:

"God indeed is my savior; I am confident and unafraid.  
My strength and my courage is the Lord, and he has been my savior.  
With joy you will draw water at the fountain of salvation."

In this New Year, may our Father in heaven be well pleased with us,

*Father John*