



*Christmas 2023*

Dear Parishioners, Visitors, and Friends,

As the world eagerly prepares to celebrate the joyous birth of our Savior, we cannot help but reflect on the countless blessings we have received and fervently pray to the Lord who has sustained us in the past.

During this Christmas season, we are acutely aware that many individuals are enduring challenging times due to violence, wars, and natural calamities. Countless people have faced physical, emotional, financial, and other hardships. Even those of us who have found solace in Christ have experienced moments of questioning amidst the upheavals in our world -- the ongoing genocides in Palestine, Myanmar, Ukraine; the devastating typhoons in Guam and the Philippines; and the destructive wildfires in Maui.

Like those who have faced turmoil and heartbreaking life situations, I too have walked the path of a refugee, without a place to call home or country. There were moments when we went without food and other necessities. However, what we yearned for the most was kindness and compassion. In the midst of these challenging times of my life, it was through the faith and actions of people, like you, that God brought a glimmer of hope into my life.

Indeed, our God chose to enter this world at its dark hour. He chose to be born in the humblest corner of Bethlehem, amidst animals. Moreover, He entered a country that was under the oppressive rule of a foreign power. Why did He choose this path? What could possibly motivate our God to become one of us?

The reason is simple: God entered our world so that we could enter His. God walked our journey so that we would have a path to follow. God experienced our pain so that we could experience His love.

This is precisely why we need Christmas and why God needs us more than ever. Let us ponder this mystery of our God as we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord and Savior.

As we gather this Christmas with loved ones, may His divine light illuminate our path, extending our compassion and support to the less fortunate.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joy-filled celebration.

**Mele Kalikimaka,**

*F. K. Church*

