

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – DECEMBER 24, 2017

Dear Parishioners and Families,

Today, the fourth Sunday of Advent, Joseph and Mary are on the final leg of their journey to Bethlehem. Bethlehem is the ancestral city of David, the greatest of the Kings of Israel. Joseph, the husband of Mary, is of the House of David and therefore he has to register at this ancestral site. They did not anticipate that so many people would be coming to register and when they got there. Slowed by Mary's pregnancy, all the rooms for the night were taken.

Permit me to think as man. I am traveling with my wife, she is feeling the pangs of birth approaching and there is no place to put up for the night or any semblance of a proper place for birth. What to do?

God takes over. Joseph and Mary find an animal shelter and this is where God was to be born. The Father will celebrate the occasion by sending emissaries to Jesus, shepherds who are disheveled and unkempt, but alert to angels. Certainly, God's ways are not our ways, and our ways are not God's ways. My prayer: "Lord, give me an increase of faith so that I may better understand your presence in my life."

New Year's Eve Party and Family – Sign To Come

The New Year's Eve Party is the parish reaching out to people who want to celebrate, have no place to go, are blessed by children, or just wishing for something social and safe. You are welcome! Please sign the list at the back of the church so the parish can make this happen. Let me put down all the things available.

1. We have 2 excellent babysitters for the evening from 7:00 o'clock to just past midnight. Young couples can come and enjoy the evening and still be close to their children in one of our classrooms. Bring whatever is necessary for the children to camp out with the babysitters.
2. We will have traditional food and some adult beverages. We suggest that those that come bring some of the Christmas cookies that are oversupplied in your homes for the desert.
3. We have many widows and widowers in our parish and they really do not want to be alone and we would like to be with them. Come and bring some card or other games to play.
4. We have the biggest TV in town. We can watch the going-ons across the country or the world, or catch a game for sports fans.
5. We especially invite those of our parish who love to socialize and be with one another. At the beginning of the evening we will say together the traditional Te Deum which is a prayer of thanksgiving for all of the last year.

I hope many of you will take advantage as a way of coming together. Our location is safe and gracious. The cost is \$20 a couple or \$12 per person. We suggest a charge of \$5 per child up to the age of 18: That will pay for food, beverage, and babysitters. Let us rejoice together.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
December 24, 2017