



# IMMACULATE HEART<sup>OF</sup> MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

## A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

DECEMBER 17, 2017

Dear friends in the coming Lord,

As much as we love Christmas, every priest in the Roman Catholic Church is bracing himself for the last week of this month! Since Christmas falls on Monday this year, we know that we will be in church most of our waking hours between December 23 and December 25. For example, Father Javier and I will preside over 13 Masses during those three days.

In a secular world that often prizes convenience over other virtues, our Catholic calendar of holy days can seem inscrutable. And yet, by making time in our lives to celebrate our feasts, whenever they may occur, we declare to the Lord and to the world the priorities that truly govern our lives.

For this reason, there is no “2-fer” available over the weekend of Christmas! Catholics are obliged to participate in both a Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent and a Christmas Mass. (The Christmas Eve Masses on Sunday, December 24 do not “count” for both!)

I realize that it will be tempting for many households to collapse these two feasts into one trip to church. I beg you to avoid that temptation. While children may complain about going to Mass twice in 2 or 3 days (and maybe not just children!), consider the example you set for them about our real values and true priorities.

I also plead for a financial gift from every household for both the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Day. The loss of a full collection would mean a shortfall to our operating budget of around \$30,000, which could undo the excellent stewardship we have all practiced in the first 6 months of this fiscal year.

I thank you in advance for your Christmas prayers for your priests. Thank you also for your Christmas devotion to your faith and your Christmas generosity to your parish.

Your brother in Christ’s word and work,