

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am so looking forward to our Quarterly Anointing Mass on Friday, December 2nd at 10 a.m. All are invited to participate in the Mass, especially our Senior parishioners, anyone anticipating or recovering from surgery, and those living with a chronic health condition. Please come to experience the healing grace of our Savior. A time to gather and socialize will follow in the parish hall.

As we begin this season of Advent, I am reminded of something Virginia Owens stated in her book, *“And the Trees Clap Their Hands”*. She suggests that in life, we risk losing the wonder of it all, because along the way everything becomes *“merely.”* Things are *“merely”* stars, sunset, rain, flowers, and mountains. Their connection with God’s creation is lost. As we begin this Advent season, it is so important that we do not fall into the same trap when it comes to our beautiful Advent/Christmas celebrations: *“Merely”* Bethlehem, a stable, a wreath, a light in the darkness . . . a birth.

Within our Advent readings nothing is *“merely.”* Things are not *“merely”* things but are part of God’s grand design. Common things, such as waiting, a visitor, motherhood, a birth, a child, now have new meaning. This is not *“merely”* the world, but a world that is charged with the beauty and grandeur of God’s design. It is a world so loved by God that God gave His only Son.

I pray that our Advent season will give us fresh eyes and open hearts to the beauty and grandeur and Holy presence of Emmanuel, God – with – us!

Advent joy+



Fr. Tom
Pastor