



SACRED HEART OF JESUS PARISH

Bath, Pennsylvania

Christmas 2022

My Dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish,

Generosity is certainly a quality or characteristic that encompasses the birth of Our Lord and the Christmas spirit. From the very beginning in the Gospel of Matthew, we explicitly see how the birth of Christ brings about the generosity of the three magi who present the Christ child with their gifts:

“And on entering the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother. They prostrated themselves and did Him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” (Matthew 2:11).

How many real-life stories do we read about in the news every Christmas season of a “Secret Santa” who change a person, or a family’s, life by helping them out of what would be, if left to themselves, a financial impossibility. Some of the greatest and enduring movies in cinema history such as *It’s a Wonderful Life*, *A Christmas Carol*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, and many more show the personal effect of generosity in one’s own life. Whether the film is live action or animation, no matter if the audience is directed towards adults or children, a very common lesson is often that when we are generous, and when we give expecting nothing in return, we do actually receive something in return. We receive something we probably needed, and it ends up being a great blessing.

Of course, we need to always guard against materialism, so generosity does not simply mean giving things to people or storing them up for ourselves. Being generous does mean opening our hearts to others’ needs: materially, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. To care for one another in their time of need is knowing that we can make a difference. I know that we as a Parish are very generous already. But we also live in a world that often emphasizes looking out “for number one” and being selfish without actually saying it out loud. So let us together and again make a continued, conscious, intentional point to be generous in all things this Christmas and in 2023. We may never know the effect of our generosity, some effects may be large, some may be smaller, some fruits may be life changing, but whenever we are generous, we are blessed by God, “For God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7). God bless you and thank you for all you do!

Sincerely Yours in The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Rev. Christopher S. Butera

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Pastor