

The Parish Community of St. Kevin

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Advent and Christmas 2017

***“Then the Angel of the Lord stood before them,
and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
But the Angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you
good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is the Christ, the Lord.”***

It is with these words in mind that we write to you during this beautiful Advent-Christmas season. We reach out to our Parishioners – our family – to remind you how much you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Time and time again over the course of the past year, we have been overwhelmed with reasons to be *terrified*, just as the shepherds were frightened. From those on the brink of financial despair to those battling chronic illness to those dealing with broken down relationships and to those victims of our often violent culture – it seems we all have much to fear. And sometimes, it may be the simple daily challenges that do much to *terrify* us and cause us to worry.

In spite of the numerous reasons to be *terrified*, and know that we as Priests are often *terrified* too, we all need to put our trust in the Angel’s declaration: **Do not be afraid!** Let us all be reminded of the good news of great joy, just as the Angel assured the shepherds. We must help one another to see the good news and to live the good news. The radiant smile from our neighbour, the helping hand of a volunteer, the laughter of our children, and the kindness of those we work with daily – these acts bring the good news – and they are comforting, not terrifying.

Any good news, no matter how great or small, is what we should carry with us as we approach our Christmas celebrations and anxiously await the coming of our Lord. The birth of Jesus is a joyous occasion, with much hope. It is a celebration and it is a sign of God’s love for us. It is the greatest news of all! Jesus’ birth gives us plenty of reason to celebrate this season and to not be afraid.

We invite our Parish Community, as well as all friends, families, visitors, or any persons who need to find their way home this Christmas to join us at Mass. By coming home not only to the Parish Community of St. Kevin, but in journeying in defiance of terror as the shepherds did, every one of us will be touched by the good news. And in receiving the good news, we will share in the *hope, peace, joy, and love* that is the Angel’s reassurance to us all.

Advent Greetings and Christmas Blessings!

Fr. Vijai Amirtharaj, CSC Fr. James Mulligan, CSC