

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.

Christmas Video Message 2016



Dear Brother Priests,
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Today, the Son of God is born, and everything changes...From now on, the way of authentic liberation and perennial redemption is open to every man and woman who is simple of heart.” So spoke Pope Francis last year during his homily at the Christmas Mass at night.

The process of authentic liberation began with the Incarnation and Birth of a little Child in Bethlehem. The world has never been the same since that event over two thousand years ago.

However, the struggle to make that liberation effective in our lives continues. So much constrains us: a wealth of information, but little criteria to judge what is authentic and useful, the dictatorship of relativism, a somewhat pervading sense of indifference, our just concern for those we love and their welfare, and the world situation all curtail our liberty. Today’s world still suffers from the exploitation that obliged the Savior of the World to be born in a stable.

Yet you and I know that His birth made a difference. Reborn in the waters of baptism, we have experienced the power of the Eucharist, been healed in the sacrament of penance, and been uplifted by the leadership of our recent Holy Fathers. We can be a people of hope and we are committed to making a difference in our world. A people of hope dares to live a different life and to throw off the temptation to mediocrity.

It is my joy to greet you today by means of this message. The global extension of the Archdiocese entrusted to my pastoral care makes this opportunity especially precious. It allows me to enter your chapels for a brief moment so as to encourage your pilgrimage of faith and assure you of my concern for your spiritual growth and welfare. Of course, in our celebration of the source and summit of our lives as Catholics, which is the Eucharist, we are always spiritually united. Humanly speaking, it is also valuable to have this virtual contact.

Military and embassy communities will welcome me to Bulgaria, Romania, Bahrain, and Kuwait during the final days of Advent and the celebration of Christmas. The opportunity to

celebrate the Eucharist with them, to administer confirmation, and to hear about their missions and efforts to live the Gospel will be priceless. I am grateful to the generous benefactors who make pastoral visitation possible.

Many of you will be separated from family and loved ones at this time of year and, while I share your sacrifice, I want to thank you for your commitment to defend the ideals and freedoms that are the hallmark of the United States of America. Your willingness to serve the needs of others is a true mark of authentic commitment. I am equally grateful for others, our beloved Veterans and especially those who have been scarred forever while paying the price of that freedom, whose care is assured in the facilities and Medical Centers of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Of course, many others will gather with their children and help them discover the wonder of the Savior's birth. Christmas is indeed a time when members of a family want to be together. It is a time when we are reminded that the Church is a family where God is the Father. Wherever we are, we should immediately feel at home in church, in the field, or in the base chapel when Mass is celebrated.

For many both on installations and, especially, among the deployed, having a celebration of the Eucharist is not a given. That fact motivates our prayers to the Lord of the harvest to send workers who will tend the flock of the Lord. That is one reason why a prayer for vocations is included in the prayer of the faithful at every Mass offered on a military installation or VA hospital. That prayer and an earnest desire for lasting peace certainly motivate us on our journey.

On behalf of my Auxiliary Bishops, active and retired, the clergy and staff of the Archdiocese, I wish all of you and your loved ones near and far serenity and lasting joy and I invoke abundant blessings upon you. Merry Christmas and a blessed 2017!