

HOMILY CHRISTMAS YRA 2019

Touch the hand of God
Let him calm your troubled mind,
and caress your tender sorrow.
Know the love of God,
as you walk that weary road,
as you travel your tomorrows,
never alone.

Touch the hand of God. 2,000 years ago Jesus came into the world in a way that we could touch his hand. Jesus is real. As we heard in the Gospel he was born when Quirinius was governor of Syria. We can visit the place where he was born in Bethlehem. He is a real person in history. Even many of the organized religious that do not believe that Jesus is God, know that he existed. When he came into the world in human form he gave us a life style to follow. It is all recorded in the Gospels. Jesus is alive and with us today. He loves us unconditionally and wants to care for us. He wants to walk our journey with us. He loves us and wants to communicate with us and help us, but it is up to us whether or not we are going to take him with us on our journey.

Life is hard. The power of Christmas is not in the lights or the decorations of the gifts. The power of Christmas is that we see a change in people. People are more loving, more generous, more filled with good will. This gives us hope that things can be better. None of us knows what is ahead for us in the coming year. It could be a whole year filled with joy and that would be great. But we could have to face a difficult medical diagnosis, financial problems, a personal crisis, a marriage or family under stress, the loss of a loved one. If it is a year filled with joy, our joy will be complete with Jesus. If we are going to face some difficulties, we do not have to face them alone. Jesus loved you unconditionally and he will work with you and help you. We need to be more aware of how Jesus is already working in our lives. When you find yourself saying: "Isn't it funny how things just seem to work out, or isn't it a coincidence," stop and recognize that it is God working in your life. We need to spend more time in quiet prayer so we can be aware of the messages that he is trying to give us. Know the love of Jesus.

Loneliness is an epidemic in our country. Record numbers of people are living alone. Many people are delaying or avoiding marriage. Our extended families are scattered all over the world.

Technology has replaced relationships. We no longer have a strong sense of community in our neighborhoods or in our workplaces. We move around too much. People are starved for human interaction.

I think we overvalue independence in our country. We are trying to do things alone that we cannot accomplish by ourselves. Life would be way easier if we accepted help from others. If we refuse to be vulnerable to the people around us we are also refusing the help that we need. I think healthy interdependence is what we should be working toward. The love of God can come to us through other people. We are the hands and feet of Jesus in the world today. It seems that everything has become political. This just divides and separates us further. We cannot lose sight of the fact that we are all [part of one human family. It is not about us and the, it is just us.

I think we need our relationship with Jesus and a church affiliation now more than ever in our country. Organized religion has gotten a bad name for a variety of reasons, but it is within our churches that we can build loving and supportive communities. Everyone is welcome at St. Edith regardless of where you are in life. We welcome your children even when they act like children. If there is no crying your parish is dying. We will meet you where you are and we will not judge you. We are all on a spiritual journey and are trying to figure it out as we go along. None of us have it all figured out. If you are going through a difficult time or if you are having some struggles with the Church or with organized religion, I am happy to meet with you. All you have to do is call the office and make an appointment. You do not have to say why you want to meet. You do not have to be a registered Parishioner. You do not have to be Catholic. I am happy to meet with anyone who wants to meet with me.

None of us are sure what the next year will bring, but regardless of what life has in store, you do not have to walk the road alone. Jesus will walk with you if you take him on that journey. You have a faith community here at St. Edith if you want to walk with us. Tough the hand of God. Know the love of God as you travel your tomorrows, never alone.