



December 25, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each month, the Holy Father proposes two particular intentions to the faithful so that we might join our prayer with his. One is entitled “general” and the other “mission,” and they are included in our Daily Morning Offering. The mission intention which Pope Benedict XVI has commended to our prayer for December provides the context for my Christmas message to you, dearly-beloved members of this diocesan Church of Arlington: “that at Christmas all people of the earth recognize in the Word Incarnate the light that illuminates every heart and that all nations open their doors to Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

As we receive the Word Incarnate in Holy Communion on Christmas and kneel in adoration before the Holy Infant with Mary, Joseph and the shepherds, may we open wide our hearts to the light of His truth and love. In the splendor of His truth, we more clearly evaluate the daily circumstances of our lives, seeking to witness to His Gospel and to do His Will. In the warmth of His love, we ourselves are drawn closer to Him and thereby bring this same love – His love – to all those whose lives are intertwined with ours. Especially in these stressful times, His love enables us to give from the “little” we have to those who have even less or, in some cases, nothing.

This Christmas and throughout the New Year, even as we open our hearts to the light and love of the Holy Infant, may nations open their doors to Christ the Saviour of the world.

I shall remember each of you in the Holy Masses that I shall offer on Christmas and throughout the Christmas season. My daily prayer for you will continue into each day of the New Year.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a grace-filled New Year, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,

+ Paul S. Loverde

Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde
Bishop of Arlington