



Archevêque de Montréal

Pastoral Letter :

“IT’S CHRISTMAS!”

December 23, 2021

Whether alone, with family or friends, online or at church, physical distance may be a factor this Christmas but, through prayer, we can still be close to one another. It is Jesus who brings us together. Let us open the door of our heart; let us pursue an interior journey and welcome Jesus who comes to us, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

Let us not permit the pandemic to undermine our celebration of Christmas. God celebrates Christmas within us. Let us welcome the Holy Spirit and ready ourselves; let’s imitate Joseph and remain calm; imitate Mary and trust in God. The Infant Jesus is here. Let us kneel before Him. He is the Light that enlightens our spirit and warms our heart.

Let us go together to the crèche! At home or at church! This Holy Night is the source of Goodness, Peace and Forgiveness. In Montreal, churches remain open generally. At many churches, Mass will be celebrated wherever a team exists capable of implementing the latest health-protection measures. (Check your parish website for information.)

The pandemic is ongoing. The fight against COVID-19 continues. Being prudent is absolutely necessary. But, as in all public spaces including churches, preventive measures such as wearing masks and physical distancing have proven effective.

The pandemic is ongoing. It highlights the fragility of life. We all feel exposed. The risk is real: “my life is fragile.” But the sense of personal fragility can lead me to love with more compassion and goodwill. Jesus Himself has borne our fragility and transformed it through his radiant love.

The pandemic is ongoing. But the wonder of wonders is before our eyes. The birth of Jesus reveals the meekness and tenderness of God to us. All the people of God and society itself need Christmas. Life is beautiful, but there is hardship as well, such as the harshness of daily life we are presently experiencing all over the world. Mary and Joseph were not exempt from the hardships of life, but they faced them with meekness and the strength of grace.

Yes, the pandemic is ongoing. But it’s Christmas!

Let us celebrate Christmas together. In Jesus, may our hearts grow closer.

Merry Christmas!

Happy New Year!

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Archbishop of Montreal