



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

***She was found with child by the Holy Spirit!***

The profound beauty of this startling mystery touches our hearts and opens our spiritual eyes to the truth that changes our lives and transforms the destiny of all of us who believe and proclaim the name of Emmanuel, God with Us, Jesus, Son of God made man. What makes this possible is God's plan to redeem us all. Two realities come together. One divine, the power of God's love, the Holy Spirit, enters the human heart of a simple Jewish maiden who readily accepts God's Spirit into her heart. She in turn offers herself totally to God's by her FIAT: *let it be done to me according to your Word!*

Small wonder that the angels sing as they behold Mary giving birth to Jesus, the divine Son now one with us, fully one with us, save sin, so that we might become sharers of His life through Mary, the passage way of divinity into humanity. Think of it. Contemplate it. The divine enters the world the same way all of us did: through the womb of a loving mother. Think of it. Contemplate it. In a simple stable, surrounded by shepherds with no material means but with the richness of being poor, utterly dependent on God's loving care, teaching us what truly matters in life: human love transformed by divine love, the human love of family, the divine love of God, now joined not just this once but forever in an eternal covenant God makes with us through his only begotten Son.

As we ponder and contemplate, we are invited to respond: respond with joyful prayer, respond with grateful hearts, respond with our love for the Child, the mother, the foster father with shepherds adoring and angels singing. But now that we, once again, have come spiritually to Bethlehem with them, we must not only give thanks to God, we also must show His love through our own hearts and lives in imitation of the generosity of the new born Child Who saves the world. My friends, this Christmas may the love of God Who comes to us by the birth of Mary's Son inspire us to renew our love for all the world, for our families and our friends and, even more, for those who are poor and overlooked, those who are suffering or alone, those who are so often "left out", those who need us to show them the face of God which is the face of Jesus Christ.

***GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE TO PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL!***

**A JOYFUL AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL OF YOU WHOM I CARRY IN MY HEART!**

Faithfully yours in Christ,