



## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2016

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us."

When we look to the Christmas stable what do we see? Our God came to us not in magnificence and power; he came to us in poverty and simplicity. He was born in a barn with straw and animals, with a manger for his crib. This image shows us that our God accepted so little in order to give us so much. What an incredible gift of love!

Sadly, what we see in our world today is something completely opposite to what Jesus has modeled for us. People seem to demand much and give little. This is especially true regarding our relationship with God. The darkness of this world is often the result of selfishness and a rejection of God's love.

Christmas gives us the opportunity to focus on God and others, especially those most in need. Gifts of love are offered, knowing that it is far better to give than to receive. We savor the simplicity of family and friendship as we gather to celebrate God's gift to us. This feast has the power to transform us as we open our hearts to Jesus who accepted so little in order to give us so much.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a truly blessed Christmas. May our darkness be dispelled by the light of Christ and our hearts filled with the Good News of Christmas: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us."

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.  
Bishop of St. Catharines