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## Christmas message - 2018

Dear brother priests and dear deacons,  
Dear faithful of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie

### *“ On this day was born to us a Savior who is Christ the Lord ”*

Christmas, as we know, is not just the anniversary of Jesus' birth. It is not simply a commemoration of a historical event. The mystery of the Incarnation continues to be fulfilled today, here and now, at this precise moment.

The “on this day” proclaimed in the liturgy indicates that the birth of Jesus permeates and inhabits history. To celebrate Christmas is to highlight an event that has marked the history of humanity and continues to do so, even today. To celebrate Christmas is to mark an event that touches and transforms our personal and collective lives.

On this day, we experience the tenderness of God who, with love and mercy, looks upon our limits, our weaknesses, our sin, our humanity. He goes even further : without ceasing to be God, he becomes one of us in order to take part in our lives. On this day, as at every Eucharist, God gives himself to us so that we may fully participate in his own life.

On this day, God offers each and every one of us the opportunity to recognize and welcome him, as did the shepherds, so that Jesus may also be born into our life, bringing renewal, light and transformation through his grace and presence. The more we welcome Jesus at the heart of our lives, the more we will be able to be his witnesses and to make him known within our life circles.

During each "today" of 2019, let us walk with Jesus and with each other so that, together, we may build a better world. Together let us pray and work so that through the Incarnation of Jesus,

- \* our wounded and divided world may build peace and unity,
- \* our shaken Church may rekindle its missionary spirit,
- \* people in search of meaning and love may be comforted and fulfilled,
- \* refugees and immigrants may find a land of welcome and freedom,
- \* people on the margins of society may be supported and integrated,
- \* people broken by violence may find healing in the love of others.

What if we all started together, on this day?

On this Christmas, I bless each and every one of you. Merry Christmas! Christmas of peace! At the beginning of 2019, I wish all of you a year of faith, hope, grace and fullness of life.

+Marcel Damphousse  
Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie