



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2017

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In his homily for Midnight Mass 2006, Pope Benedict XVI stated the following: “God’s sign is simplicity. God’s sign is the baby. God’s sign is that he makes himself small for us. This is how he reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendour. He comes as a baby – defenceless and in need of our help. He does not want to overwhelm us with his strength. He takes away our fear of his greatness. He asks for our love: so he makes himself a child...God made himself small so that we could understand him, welcome him, and love him.”

We are all familiar with the Christmas tradition of gift giving. This involves spending some time in order to choose a gift that is meaningful. It is not unusual to even ask a person what he or she would like for Christmas. If we consider the quote from Pope Benedict, then we already know what Jesus wants: to understand him, welcome him, and love him. This Christmas, Jesus wants our love. Are we prepared to give Him what He wants?

Jesus became so small for us so we need to become small for Him. In speaking about the Messiah, St. John the Baptist states, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). We show our love by moving the focus from ourselves to God and others. We make the time to be with Him in prayer, to worship Him, keep His commandments, and to care for our brothers and sisters, especially those who are most in need. Christmas is a wonderful time to “make ourselves small”. This feast has the power to transform us as we welcome Jesus into our hearts.

I take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a truly blessed Christmas. May this Holy Season be a time of spiritual renewal as we celebrate the incredible gift of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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