



# CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS & AUXILIARY

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As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, it occurs to me how narrow our focus sometimes is. We anticipate the birth of Christ, and we look forward to the decorated tree, Midnight Mass, presents, and the Baby in the Manger. It is a joyous season of celebration, and it should be.

We tend to forget, however, what it took to get to that point. Mary was sent an angel, and in what is perhaps the greatest act of faith and trust in all of Scripture, she said, “Let it be done unto me according to God’s will.” She traveled to see her cousin and stayed to help her with the birth of her baby, then returned back to the scorn of the neighbors and the decision of Joseph to quietly put her away.

But he also trusted and took her as his wife. They traveled to Bethlehem, a difficult journey under any circumstances, and with a very pregnant wife. She delivered her child in a stable, shepherds and kings came to worship, a visit to the Temple gave her the prediction that a sword would pierce her heart, and then fleeing to Egypt to escape the soldiers who wished to kill her child.

In short, Mary and Joseph had to live through all sorts of difficulties and dangers, and I suspect there were many more than are simply not mentioned in the Bible. Things were difficult and uncertain, and I am sure there were times when they had nothing but their faith and trust in God to keep them going.

As we move from Ordinary Time into Advent and the Christmas celebrations, we too are in difficult and uncertain times. Many people are putting their hope and trust in a vaccine, in a new administration, in a future when things will get “back to normal.” But even the most optimistic predictions about the economy are dark, the policies of the incoming administration have many worried about their consequences, and it is too easy to get caught up in worry and apprehension and outright fear.

It is our call as Catholics, as Veterans, as those who support our veterans, as men and women who not only support but believe in the great history and traditions of our country, it is our call to look to God and to put our faith and trust in Him. In each of the steps that led to Bethlehem, that led to Egypt, that led to the River Jordan, even the steps that led to Calvary – each step was greeted with joy, because the people involved knew that they were following God’s call.

Those who know me have often heard me say and talk about “Find God in All Things.” For this season, I’d like to modify it a little – “Find JOY in all things.” Even when things seem dark, when we find ourselves in the midst of troubles and pain and great difficulties, we know that God is with us. Let us take the joy of Christmas and all the elements of the Christmas story, and make them a part of our lives not just during this season but every day of our lives.

May the peace and joy of Christ be with you now and always. During my Christmas Novena of Masses, the members of the Catholic War Veterans and the Auxiliary and all the members of your families will be remembered each day. Let us pray for the coming year, and for the many projects we will be bringing to reality.

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