

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

JANUARY 2026

O God, be gracious and bless us
And let Your face shed its light upon us.
So will Your ways be known upon earth
And all nations learn Your saving help.
Let all people praise You, O God;
Let all the people praise You. --Psalm 67:1-3

This psalm was prayed in worship by God's chosen people. In so doing, the people were desiring for God to bless them so all would see that their God was the one true God, and that all are invited to be caught up in praising Him for His goodness.

The Lord did continually bless His people as a witness to being a God of love contrary to the gods of other nations. Sometimes the chosen people took it seriously and lived out the witness; other times they just mouthed the words and continued to live as they desired making no impact on the rest of the world of the beloved nature of almighty God.

Then came the fulness of time we have just celebrated, when God blessed His people and the world in the fulfillment of a messianic person who would act in love for the salvation of all. God literally came to earth in His only begotten Son as the ultimate expression of God's love for all. The apostle John, so embraced Jesus in his heart and desired that everyone would, wrote these words to believers found in I John 4:14-16:

We ourselves are eye-witnesses able and willing to testify to the fact that the Father did send the Son to save the world. Everyone who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God lives in him, and that person lives in God. So we have come to know and trust the love God has for us. God is love, and the person whose life is lived in love does, in fact, live in God, and God does, in fact, live in him/her. (JB Philips version)

The prayer of Psalm 67 was emphatically answered, in Jesus, God fully poured out blessings for all. Now it is up to the people who were blessed, we the Church. In the same way that those who prayed the psalm in the days of old created an inner desire to live out these words, so too, the Church must take these words to heart and to the extent that they do, the world will find that for which they are searching, the meaning of life found in love.

During Advent, many of you were reading *In the Manger* by Max Lucado and you shared with me how meaningful you found it. That blessed my heart. Now that Advent has past and Christmas is fading in the rear-view mirror, may your discovery of God continue. As you found blessing in reading and reflecting during the past month, you are encouraged to maintain the practice of spending time with spiritual reading. At this point, you may choose as you so desire but do choose. As the Church spends time in the presence of God through reading and reflection, the soul will become molded in a way to reflect the saving presence of God through deeds of love and mercy which will make the impact on others. As the late Pope Francis said, *'in so doing, we will take time to smile with those who smile, to weep with those who weep, to walk alongside those who are losing hope, to share our faith with those who are searching for meaning and happiness.'* In so doing, the words of Psalm 67 will come to life and the world will know. May we all be faithful to our calling to live and make known the love of God available for all.

God be with you,

