"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

— *Romans 15:13* —

Advent

Hope • Peace • Joy • Love

Dear Parishioners and Friends of the Parish of Six Saints,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I love Advent. I love its themes of **Hope, Peace, Joy,** and **Love,** which guide us through these holy weeks of preparation and expectation. I love its call to stay awake, to watch faithfully, and to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. Advent invites us into a sacred journey, one that begins in hopeful anticipation and culminates in the celebration of God dwelling among us in Jesus Christ.

I am always moved by the vast vision Advent places before us. Through the prophets' words and God's promises, we glimpse a renewed creation where justice and mercy embrace, peace reigns, and all people witness God's saving presence. This season stretches our imaginations and enlarges our hearts.

As I reflect on Advent, I often picture generations of faithful Christians gathered during the long winter nights, sharing stories of faith around warm fires, praying together, singing songs of hope, and waiting for the promised Messiah. Their hopes and prayers echo through the centuries and join with ours today.

Hope is Advent's first gift to us.

What are you hoping for this Advent? Perhaps you long for healing, reconciliation, strength, or renewed purpose. Perhaps your hopes extend beyond yourself to your family, your community, our parish, or our world. We live in a time when daily news reports can fill us with concern: wars and violence, injustice and greed, environmental challenges, and the suffering of many vulnerable people throughout the world. Yet Advent reminds us that our hope is not rooted in circumstances but in God's promises. We trust that God is still at work bringing light into darkness and life into places of despair.

Peace is the second Advent theme.

True peace is more than the absence of conflict; it is the presence of God's reconciling love. As we prepare for Christmas, many of us carry burdens, worries, and personal challenges. Some grieve the loss of loved ones. Others face uncertainty, loneliness, illness, or strained relationships. Amid life's storms, Advent invites us to hear the angels' promise again: "Peace on earth." Christ comes to calm troubled hearts and to reconcile us with God and one another.

Joy is the third Advent theme.

Christian joy does not depend on perfect circumstances. It arises from knowing that God is faithful and that Christ is near. What a gift it is to journey through Advent together as the Parish of Six Saints. As we gather for worship, prayer, fellowship, and service, we rediscover the joy of belonging to a community of faith. We light the Advent candles, sing beloved hymns, hear God's Word proclaimed, and encourage one another as fellow pilgrims on the journey.

Finally, Advent leads us to Love.

The love revealed at Christmas is unlike any other. God loved the world so deeply that he chose to enter it, not in power and splendour, but as a vulnerable child born in humble circumstances. The first Christmas unfolded amid uncertainty and oppression. Jesus was born to a family of modest means, far from home, and yet God's salvation entered the world there.

This same Christ comes among us today. He comes whether we feel fully prepared or not. He comes whether our shopping is finished or our decorations are complete. He comes into our ordinary lives, our struggles and celebrations, our fears and hopes, bringing grace and renewal. Christ is born anew wherever hearts are open to receive him.

The Parish of Six Saints offers many opportunities throughout Advent and Christmas for worship, fellowship, outreach, and celebration. I encourage you to participate as you are able and to invite family members, friends, neighbours, and anyone seeking a place of faith and belonging. The schedule of Advent and Christmas services, along with special events accompanying this letter, is offered as an invitation to deepen your spiritual journey and prepare your heart for the coming of our Lord.

May this Advent season draw us closer to Christ, closer to one another, and closer to the mission God has entrusted to us as the Parish of Six Saints. Wishing you every blessing in this holy season and a joyful celebration of our Lord's Nativity.

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. Christopher Edias Tapera
Rector - Parish of Six Saints, Moncton

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

— *Luke 3:4* —