

O holy night...it is the night of our dear savior's birth...long lay the world

December 2010

Brothers and Sisters:

This year my hope for Christmas is that more people will put the missing "y" back in Christmas. There is no "y" in Christmas, you may say. But there is I say, and all too often it is missing. Let me explain. For many many people Christmas is a holiday. For many people it is both a holiday and a Holy Day. And for some it is entirely a Holy Day. I invite you to ask yourself into which of these three categories you are and do you really want to be there. And if you are someplace you do not want to be, I invite you to do something about it.

It seems every year more and more people are concerned more about the Christmas holiday than the Holy Day (some even prefer saying "Happy Holiday to Merry or Blessed Christmas". Their time and effort is on planning for the holiday trappings, the shopping and decorating, the parties, the clothes, often keeping up with the Jones and keeping score. Some are so consumed by these activities they often say they hate Christmas and can't wait for it to be over. I think it is sad when someone hates this most special and beautiful Holy Day.

I do not see anything wrong with celebrating the Christmas holiday so long as that does not consume too much of your time to the point it interferes with the observance and celebration of the Holy Day. Holidays can be great fun and very joyful and we certainly want Christmas to be fun and joyful. But we need to be careful not to lose perspective.

As I thought about a theme for my Christmas message this year I wanted it to speak to the true meaning of Christmas and that led me to think of the Christmas Hymn "O Holy Night" some of the words of which make up the border of this message. Please read these words here and then go to a hymnal or pull the entire hymn (paying close attention to both the first and third verses and their powerful message) off the web and read it in its entirety. Perhaps print it out and keep it with you this holiday season through all your preparations as a reminder of how holy this holiday is. It will help you maintain a good balance between holiday and Holy Day.
Have a Blessed Christmas



Joe Duffy
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all oppression shall cease... o night, o holy night, o night divine.

He taught us to love one another, His law is love and His gospel is peace...

...pinning...till he appeared... a thrill of hope...the world rejoices...