Christmas Message from Fr Jude

Dear Parish Family of St James, as 2016 comes to an end, it’s time to celebrate Christmas and send greetings for 2017.

Pope Francis, with his sense of joy and endearing smile, continues to present us with positive words and actions of how we can make a difference in our world. The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy which we began last December came to an end on the Feast of Christ the King this year. Pope Francis continually reminds us of our Christian calling to go out and be witnesses of mercy. The Year of Mercy has provided our whole Church with the chance to be renewed in this mission and to become more aware of Christ in our midst.

Again, the Christmas spirit reminds us of the need to be generous of heart in ourselves, and to focus on the Christian perspective of the ‘summer holiday season’. The peace and love, simplicity and openness of the manger scene of Bethlehem challenges us to reflect on what is important in our lives and appreciate the fragility of life and to make the most of the opportunities we have to live life well.
It’s a time to give thanks too, for all the good things that have happened during the last year, and to those who have enabled growth and support in our welcoming communities. We also thank all those who have put in so much in so many ways in making our Parish and school communities the happy and welcoming places they are, in all our diversity as we continue to live the Gospel as Good News in our lives.

I also thank those who have been involved in leading and participating in the many different ministries and activities in Parish and school life during the past year. It’s terrific to see the building works in our schools rising rapidly to enhance our educational endeavors for our young people for the future. Also, we rejoice in the initiatives and planning taken by our Church Building Extension Committee thus far.

Please remember to join us at one of our Christmas Masses on Christmas Eve at the 6:30pm Family Mass, 9:00pm and Midnight, and Christmas day at 8:30am and 10:30am.

At this time of peace and good will, so needed in a complicated world, Fr Ivan, mssp Provincial, Fr Brendan, the Parish Council and I wish you all, along with your families, a happy and holy Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year in 2017.