

**Joy to the world, the Lord has come.**



When we look at the birth narratives in Luke, we find them overflowing with **joy**. Everyone is amazed, everyone is **joyful!** **Mary sings. Elizabeth sings. Zechariah sings. Angels sing. Shepherds sing.** Sounds like an **ancient Broadway musical!**

As we approach a New Year, how about making 2023 different by reaching out **more** to others: **smiling** more, being more **positive**, a **phone call**, a **card**, a surprise. I read that life is **not** a **journey** to the grave with the intention of arriving in a **pretty** and **well-preserved body** but walking through those “pearly gates” with a totally **worn-out body** (some of us already qualify!) thoroughly used up here on earth in service to others and shouting at the top of our voices, **“WOW, WE MADE IT, WHAT A RIDE!”**. **“I made a difference!”**

Helen Keller once said, “**Christmas** is our own season to shine like the stars. If we are feeling **blessed** with family and friends, repay the blessing by **doing something for others**. Reflect the **Christmas** spirit with a big smile on your face. Give gifts of a **cheerful disposition: laughter, compliments, affection, listening**, (these gifts are **priceless**) and **sending printed Christmas cards**.”

St. Pope John XXIII ’s words are challenging:

“Let your **inner glow** of light shine through your **eyes**. Make this season yours again and make your **Christmas** the **best** ever. Christmas time reminds us of **God’s love** because **Jesus is the reason for the season**. Sometimes it is **we** who must bring the light of His **love** to others.”

So, what **gift** can we give to **Jesus** during this season of **love**? I think the **answer** is in this poem by English poet Christina Rossetti:

What can I give Him?  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a Wise Man  
I would do my part.  
Yet what can I give Him?  
**Give my heart.**

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! You will be remembered in a **novena of Masses** that is being offered for the family and **friends of Our Lady of Peace Community**.