

Dear Parish Family of St Elizabeth of the Trinity,

Merry Christmas!

Christ our Savior is born—let Heaven and earth rejoice! As we gather around the manger this Christmas, my heart is filled with gratitude for each of you, because your faith and generosity make our Parish such a community of faith and a spiritual home for all.

Christmas is a celebration of God's hospitality. It begins not with our welcome of God, but with His welcome of us. St. John remind us, "**And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth**" (**John 1:14**). In the birth of Jesus, God opens His heart and His life to humanity. He does not demand that we come to Him first. Instead, He comes to us—small, vulnerable, and laying in a manger. This is the wonder that our patron, Elizabeth of the Trinity, loved intensely—that God chooses to dwell within us. And Christmas also calls us to extend that same hospitality. Every time we open our homes and hearts to others, we carry on the miracle of Bethlehem.

As I celebrate my first Christmas with you, I thank you wholeheartedly for extending God's hospitality to me. Growing up in Rwanda, in a family of twelve with many cousins and nieces, Christmas was always a deeply cherished family celebration. We had a long tradition of attending Christmas Mass together and gathering afterward at my parents' home. Our Christmas meal was simple but abundant: beef, Irish potatoes, rice or *fufu*, vegetables, and drinks—beer, banana wine, and sodas for the children. The adults played cards and shared stories, while the boys ran off to play soccer and the girls played a lively chasing game, like tag, called "*guhana ubute*." The children would receive candies after singing for the Baby Jesus laid in our family manger. My siblings have continued these traditions after my parents passed away, and they are delighted that this year I will spend Christmas with my parish family.

As we celebrate our faith and renew our hope in God-Emmanuel, we will keep welcoming new families, comforting the grieving, and reaching out to those in need. You make St. Elizabeth of the Trinity a true family of faith. Together, we will continue to grow in Christ by strengthening our community, sharing the Gospel, and deepening our worship.

On behalf of our parish and school staff, I thank you for all the many ways you share your time, talent, and treasure for the good of our community.

May 2026 be a year of grace, renewal, and deeper communion with God and one another.

**With Christmas blessings and affection in Christ,
Fr. Deogratias "Deo" Mbonyumugenzi**

Christmas Masses

(Holy Day of obligation)

Wednesday, December 24 – 3:00 & 5:00 p.m.

**Thursday, December 25 – 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m. &
& 1:00 p.m. (Spanish)**

Mary, Mother of God (New Year's) Masses

(Holy Day of obligation)

Wednesday, December 31 – 5:00 p.m.

**Thursday, January 1 – 9:00 a.m. (English)
11:00 a.m. (Spanish)**