



**Trinity Church Wall Street 2pm Holy Eucharist – Christmas Eve
The Rev. Dr. Mark Bozzuti-Jones Transcript**

Do Not Be Afraid, Share the Good News

"These are scary times. And, they were scary times for Mary and Joseph too, but do not be afraid. Be good news, and share good news," the Rev. Dr. Mark Bozzuti-Jones says in today's 2pm Family Eucharist sermon on Christmas Eve. As we reflect on this difficult year, Father Mark reminds of things we can be grateful for: "Nothing can stop God's love, nothing can stop Christmas, and nothing can stop us from being loving and caring."

Sermon Transcript:

She gave birth to her first-born son. Amen. Merry Christmas. Amen.

What a time and what a way for us to celebrate Christmas. It has been a hard time. Individually. It has been a hard time for us as a family. It has been a hard time for us as a church for people of New York. But wherever you are and throughout this world, it has been a challenging time. But you know what? This is why this Christmas feels so special and this is why this Christmas feels so right. Because we have done our best. We have tried our best. We have tried to be compassionate with ourselves. We have tried to be compassionate with each other. We have tried to take care of ourselves and to take care for each other. For so many of us, the fact that we can't travel, the fact that we won't be able to visit our family and our friends. That hurts. That makes this Christmas very different. At the same time, it unites all of us so we can think of so many people throughout the world in this country who can't see grandma, grandpa, mom, dad, sister, brother, husband, wife, children, grandchildren, and friend.

At the same time, we are called to be loving and we're called to continue loving. We're called to celebrate Christmas. I think for all of us this Christmas has a deeper meaning because we have been with our families. It has not always been easy, but we have a deeper sense of family. We have a deeper sense of longing for each other, of caring for each other. When I started the reflection for today, I did something that is familiar to all of us. We have done that for the first responders. Today, I want to do it for you and the whole Trinity family because we have responded to each other with love and with care, and with our very best. Let nothing ever stop our love. Let nothing ever get in the way of you trying to be a loving person. That is what Christmas is all about. It's about a family expecting a child. It's about a family expecting a gift. It's about a family being a gift and love for each other.

We hear in our gospel reading, she gave birth to her first-born son. She gave birth. It's the message of Christmas that God longs to be part of our family. God longs to be born in us. It is just as true for God. Nothing can stop God's love. Nothing can stop Christmas, and nothing can stop us from being loving and caring. I want to end by having us listen to the words of the angels to the shepherds. "Do not be afraid. For see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people." Of course, these are scary times and they were scary times for Mary and Joseph, and scary times for the shepherds who didn't know what they were being called into. But listen to these words. "Do not be afraid. For I am bringing you good news." May God bless all of us. As we celebrate the spirit of Christmas. May we recognize that God is

good news to each of us. That God seeks to be born in us as good news. May the gift we give to our family, may the gift we give to each other, and may the gift we give to ourselves, be the words of the angels. No matter what. Do not be afraid, say that to yourself and say that to someone this Christmas. I bring you good news. Be good news and share good news. Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas. May God bless you. May God bless your family. We miss you. We all share in that this Christmas. We miss each other, but let us do our best to help each person not be afraid and to find, to hear, and to be the good news of God.

Amen.