



*And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."... Luke 2:12-15*

Dear Members of the Cheverus Family,

In a just a few days, we will leave school for a much anticipated Christmas break. As we near this time, one can sense the anticipation on the part of the children, and perhaps even some of the teachers. It is, however, the sense of wonder and enthusiasm by the littlest ones that is most striking. Talk of toys and Santa Claus, preparing for the Nativity pageant, and performances by pre-schoolers all enhance the excitement that comes with the season. I suppose that this kind of atmosphere exists in most schools where there a younger children. It is after all Christmas.

At Cheverus, there is an added element, a very important distinguishing feature. Here you will find more than holiday songs, more than wreaths and trees, and more than talk about Santa Claus. You see, we at Cheverus are privileged to be able to talk about and teach the real reason for celebrating. So in addition to the tree, there is a manger on display. In addition to singing "Jingle Bells," our children can sing "O, Holy Night" and "Oh, Come all Ye Faithful." In addition to reading Clement Moore's "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," our children read from Isaiah and Luke and participate in the lighting of candles on the Advent Wreath. This "value added" enhances the wonder and adds to the meaning of Christmas in ways that public and charter schools cannot. The "value added" I refer to is of course the spiritual growth and development that come with reflection on that event that occurred over 2,000 years ago.

How privileged we are! What a gift it is to share in the joys of Christmas with the children entrusted to our care. The experience of teaching young children, your children, insures that we re-live the child-like wonder and enthusiasm that comes each year at this time. It also reminds us of why we have reason to gift one another. We celebrate God's gift of his only Son sent to save us!

On behalf of the entire Cheverus Catholic Community, I wish you a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Arria, Jr.  
Principal