

**January 1, 2021**

**Dear parishioners and friends of the Mission,**

**As we continue to rejoice in the afterglow of Christmas, we wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to you for the many kind wishes, cards, notes, letters and gifts that we received. We have many good cooks in our parish who sent “goodies” our way. So, we *three amigos* have had to amp-up our exercise routines!**

**We were so inspired by how many of you joined us for our Christmas Liturgies. Even the wind, rain and cold did not deter us or dampen our spirits. We are so grateful to all of our Liturgical Ministers: Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Music Ministers, Sacristans and Altar Servers. And a special word of thanks to our Environment Committee and Maintenance Staff who worked so hard to create a beautiful, welcoming and safe worship space for our Liturgies.**

**The year 2020, will no doubt be remembered as a most unusual and challenging year. Our hearts go out to the many families who have lost loved ones and who are still suffering. We would also like to thank and honor the many front line workers for their dedication and compassion and for putting their lives on the line each day. As we turn the page to 2021, we hope and pray for a better, brighter and healthier New Year.**

**On a more somber note, please pray for my friend, Bishop Moses Chikwe. While I was Pastor of St. Joseph’s Cathedral (2007-2015), Fr. Moses Chikwe, a priest of the Diocese of Owerri, Nigeria, lived in residence. He was completing his Doctorate Degree from UCLA and served as a chaplain at the VA Hospital in La Jolla. Upon completion of his Doctorate, he returned to his home Diocese. In October of 2019, Pope Francis announced that Fr. Moses was appointed as the Auxiliary Bishop of Owerri. I went to Nigeria for his Episcopal Ordination, which took place on December 8, 2019.**

**Sadly, we have been informed that Bishop Chikwe was kidnapped by gunmen earlier this week. There is a great deal of strife and violence in Nigeria. His whereabouts are presently unknown. I ask that you join me in prayer for his safety and return to his Diocese.**

**God Bless and keep you! Happy New Year!**

**Fr. Peter M. Escalante**