



*Diocese of Fall River*  
*Office of the Bishop*  
*Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.*

Christmas Message 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our celebration of Christmas 2025 comes during our Jubilee Year of Hope—a Holy Year inaugurated by Pope Francis and continued by Pope Leo XIV. How wonderful a blessing this is for us for hope is at the very heart of our Christmas joy. In the Incarnation, as the divine and human are united, hope becomes flesh in Jesus Christ.

St. Luke's Gospel conveys this hope in the first words of the Angel Gabriel to the shepherds at Christ's birth: *"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy... A Savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord"* (Luke 2:10–11).

The hope and joy of Christmas offer us an opportune time to pause and reflect on our lives, giving thanks to God for our blessings—especially for our loved ones gathered with us in this holy season, and for those whom prayerfully we remember who have been called to eternal rest.

Throughout this Jubilee Year, we have been inspired by the many young people who have turned to God and to the Church in search of answers and meaning in an increasingly complex world. This is truly a sign of hope for the Church, our Diocese and for our world. We have also witnessed the very best in humanity as countless generous and selfless individuals have worked to make a difference in the lives of our brothers and sisters who are suffering. In them, we see the darkness of despair overcome by the light and love of Christ.

An honest reflection must also acknowledge the challenges we face in our personal lives and as a nation. We are called to this reflection amid the noise and divisions of our time.

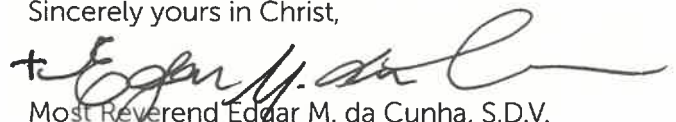
In his recent document *Delexi Te (I Have Loved You)*, Pope Leo XIV calls us to respond to the many "faces of the poor and of poverty," including "the poverty of those who lack material means of subsistence" and those "who are socially marginalized and lack the means to give voice to their dignity and abilities" (9). The Holy Father has also consistently urged world leaders to come together to find peaceful solutions to conflicts that inflict suffering and destroy the lives of the innocent.

This Christmas, I invite all of us to turn to God in fervent prayer for peace in our world. Let us unite in prayer that no one, especially innocent children, is forced to spend another year in fear, uncertainty, hunger and wondering if they will live to see another day or embrace their loved ones once again. This holy season calls us to renew our confidence that, with prayer, hearts can be changed and peace is possible, and that each of us has a part to play in building it.

Even in the midst of division, uncertainty, and conflict, God continues to enter our lives and our world to bring hope, light, and renewal. Christmas invites us to look beyond the darkness that may surround us and to recognize in the simple manger of Bethlehem an enduring sign of God's love for humanity. Hope will not disappoint, and God will continue loving, caring for, and protecting each of us, our families, and our world.

Please be assured of my prayers for a happy, joyful, and Merry Christmas. May God bless you and your loved ones now and in the coming year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.  
Bishop of Fall River

47 Underwood Street • Fall River, Massachusetts 02720-3701  
Telephone: 508-675-1311 • Facsimile: 508-679-9220