

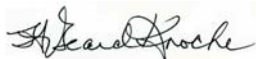
Christmas blessings to you!

"Generous" is the word I would use to describe our church this year. We gave over 10 million dollars to the Tsunami victims. Then came Hurricane Katrina, and we had an even greater outpouring - more than \$18 million, to say nothing of our truckloads of supplies. People used vacation time to go in crews to help folks clean up debris and begin getting their lives back in order. Then Hurricane Wilma and the tornadoes in the Midwest ravaged the countryside, and even after giving to the other disasters, people dug in their pockets once more. Mission support to the synod is at the highest level it has ever been in ELCA history for this time of the year. When we see our brothers and sisters in need, we know how to love in tangible ways and do it.

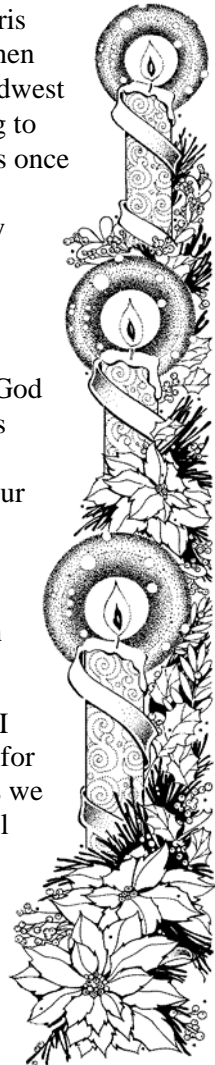
I hope that we learned this from the way God dealt with us at Christmas. God was generous beyond all measure in sending his Son to live among us. The devastation we had made of our lives and of creation evoked from God the grandest response imaginable. God took on human form and came among us to help us clean up the debris in our lives and get a fresh start. What great love this is!

The Delaware-Maryland Synod staff and I hope that this Christmas you will give thanks for God's generosity in giving us his Son, even as we give thanks for your generosity in giving to all God's people.

Peace and joy,



H. Gerard Knoche
Bishop, Delaware-Maryland Synod



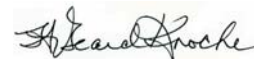
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