

Christmas Eve *and* Christmas Day

December 24-25, 2024

The arrival of any infant into a family is *usually* an occasion of **great joy**. The family calls relatives and throw parties. The dad *might* pass out real or bubble gum cigars and the mother *sits* in a glow of warmth of peace after all the *birthing* has been completed. But as much as the child is welcomed and loved, there comes with the child a bit of stark reality. **This child**, especially if it is the **first**, is going to cause a **lot of changes** *in the lifestyle of any parent*. They cannot jump and go as easily as they did before. At night, their sleep may be interrupted in order to **feed** the baby, change a **diaper** or **rock** away tears. For *many* years they will be doing things that are **difficult**; **staying with** the sick child; **being patient** when they are exceptionally tired; **keeping a watchful eye** on almost every aspect of the child's life. In and of itself, **it is a fulltime job for anyone who is going to do it well**.

I TRULY ADMIRE PEOPLE THAT CAN DO THIS.

The birth of **Jesus Christ** was cause for great joy – to His parents, to shepherds and kings, to the whole world. A savior has been given... came in *the vulnerability* as a **child**. But just like **any** child born into a family, this Jesus, *reborn* in our hearts, comes to call us to **change**. We cannot receive this loving God into our lives and continue in selfish ways. We must make changes.

There is a *two-fold effect* of the birth of **this** child. This child is a light that shines for the *hopeless* and *helpless*. He is a Wonder Counselor, God-Hero, Prince of Peace. Our lives will be changed in an instant. **Burdens** will be removed and **peace** will come to our land. Surely Jesus will be a cause for rejoicing..... but this child will come **demanding** justice. As the ideal KING, he will promote God's Will. **It's His job**. He will call those who are NOT doing God's Will to make changes in the way they live. **Ouch!**

Jesus' **first** coming as a *human* was to **bring salvation**. He gave Himself COMPLETELY. This coming was an occasion of **joy**, of **hope** for those who have miserable lives (*which is just about everyone I know*). Now, at the same time, Jesus called us to **new life**, to become **a people eager to do what is right**. Again, the *birth* of Jesus *demand*s some change in our lives so as to be prepared for **His** second coming...**that is when you and I dies**... that is His second coming... *to take us back to God*.

The **Gospel** shows us the changes that take place in the life of Joseph and Mary. These two **simple** people, *poor and resting in a stable* are **full of joy** at the birth of *their* child. But with the birth, ***all kinds of things begin to happen***. **Shepherds appear** telling of angels in the night sky. Later, **strangers** from the East **will come** bringing expensive gifts. **Joseph will dream dreams**. They will high tale it to Egypt. Their lives will change and keep changing.

We gather here to remember that Jesus was born to our world, *a human being like us. He came to show God's incredible love.* In short, **Jesus came to comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.** He does this so well. But His coming is also a call. A call to change any selfish ways we act to each other, cruel ways that we speak about one another, the changes that we make that harm us instead of doing us well. **Jesus showed love and forgiveness to all.** Our response to all of this is to be a **gift** to each other, to be a **light** that sits in darkness.

Once more the world will hear the proclamation, “**Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to all.**” This time it will not come from angels' voices **but in the way we live life.** *He is born over and over again each time we receive Him in Eucharist.* We cannot help but become what we eat. He calls us to give the greatest gift of all; **the gift of selfless love. That is really all we can give in making a difference.**

End

(Read “One Solitary Life” if needed.)