

Solemnity of the Nativity: Mass During the Day A2022

When we read the Bible, from the call of Abraham to the story of all the prophets, one of the striking points we find is that they all talk about God, but none of them had ever seen God.

When Abraham speaks of God, he says that the voice of God came to him recommending him to leave his country; when Moses speaks of God, he says that he heard a voice from the burning bush commending him to go and liberate the Israelites, but in reality they did not see God. Even when the prophets talk about their vocation or mission, they often say that in a vision, God appeared to them and talked to them, but in truth they did not see the face of God. There is even a tradition in Exodus 33: 20 that says: "No one can see God and remain alive".

That invisible God that nobody has ever seen has suddenly chosen to make himself visible in Jesus Christ by becoming a human being. The letter to the Hebrews describes God's many attempts to communicate with the world and to reveal his love.

First, God tried to reveal himself to the ancestors through the work of his creation. But that way was not enough. Then, he tried to make known his will and to communicate his message through the mouth of the prophets. Even that way was not enough. In the end, when his time was fulfilled, God sent his Son into the world. This Son is the One through whom he made all things from the beginning of the world. He created the universe and sustains it in him, with him and through him.

Christmas is the celebration of the revelations of God to the world. It is the feast of God who chooses to be visible and become a human being. Christmas is the feast of the love of God for us, a love so big that it comes down and dwells with us.

Who is this Jesus we are celebrating at Christmas? The Letter to the Hebrews says that Jesus is the perfect image of the invisible God. He is the reflection of the glory of the Father and the fingerprint by which God sustains all existing things in being. Saint John adds to this description what follows: Jesus is the Word of the Father with whom he created the universe. He preexists from the beginning of the world; because all things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.

All this helps us understand that at Christmas we celebrate a big mystery of our faith: a God who becomes a human being in order to save us. In Jesus, the ever-invisible God has taken flesh and become a human being like us. In Jesus, God has taken a human face and espoused human nature. Jesus is not only the Son of Mary, but also the Son of God, the Savior. He was from the beginning with God and he is God. He gives life to the world and to those who believe in him.

Jesus is the light that the Father has sent into the world to enlighten our darkness. Whoever accepts God's light will never be lost. Jesus, the word of the Father, is God's gift to the world to bring us peace and joy. Whoever welcomes him and walks in his paths will have the peace of heart that surpasses any good someone can have in this life.

If we want God's light and life to be manifested in us, we need to change our lives, to make them conform to the image of the One who has become one of us so that we become part of him. We must give up all evil behavior that pushes us to choose sin and

death instead of life. That is why the celebration of Christmas challenges us to embrace Jesus and become like him and live out of his words.

At the center of Christmas, there is a mystery of God who has become one of us. In Jesus, the ever-invisible God has taken flesh and become a human being like us. In Jesus, God has taken a human face and espoused human nature and history. From now on, we know that God has a face and a name. From now on, we know who God is for us because he is “Emmanuel.”

As Christians we witness to the truth that, in spite of wars in our world and many difficulties in our own lives, we are not alone. God is with us in his Son, Jesus Christ; he loves us. To know that God loves us and wants us to belong to him makes a difference in our lives. It gives us the courage to confront the present and the hope to fight for the future.

Christmas is not a celebration of a past event, but of an event that takes place today as we try hard to live in the spirit of Christ. Christmas leads us to the contemplation of the face of God in the child in the crib. In this night, there is a revelation of God who made himself poor, but there is also a revelation of a new world and, a beginning of a new history between God and humanity.

Christmas invites us to live our present life out of the values of God’s kingdom. The child in the crib reminds us that in him we have become brothers and sisters. Therefore, we have to get out of ourselves, to go toward others, not to be scared of others even if they are different from us. Let us open ourselves to the differences, for we are all equal before the crib.

Because in the Christmas event our salvation has already started, let us rejoice with the angels and all the men and the women of good will. Let us make our own the joy and the cheerfulness that stirred up Jerusalem at the return of the deportees. Then we can say with Isaiah, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to the desperate and the needy, “Your God is King” and in Jesus you have a Savior.

This Christmas is overshadowed by the war in Ukraine, the civil war in Ethiopia and the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Each one of us is a battle field. If you do not win the war inside yourself, you will never bring peace to others. May the birth of Jesus help us work for peace! The joy and the peace of Christ are more compelling than prejudices that divide us. May we listen to the voice of wisdom the child in the crib addresses us! God has become one of us to share with us his life. Let us respond to him with love and listen to his cry as he begs our love. Blessed Christmas to everyone!

Isaiah 52: 7-10; Hebrews 1: 1-6; John 1: 1-18



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