

God is With Us – Do We Notice Him!

The Last Few Days have been important in our Advent Journey.

Friday – Dec 16th, we ended the first part of the Season Advent in which we focused our preparation for the 2nd Coming of Jesus and meeting Him in the Present as well.

On Saturday – Dec 17th our focus shifted to preparing ourselves for the Birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

Matthew's Gospel yesterday set out the genealogy of Jesus Christ. He was connected to Abraham via 42 generations of people. Isn't that amazing to think about? Jesus had parents, grandparents, and a lot of great, great Grandparents.

Matthew traced Jesus' ancestry from Abraham through David down to Joseph, to show how the Hebrew Scriptures and the promises to Abraham and David were fulfilled by Jesus.

Today, is the 4th Sunday of Advent. First time in a long time that we have a whole week to prepare before Christmas.

So, the question is how will we prepare for Christmas.

We can do so by opening our hearts.

A kindergarten teacher told her class the story of Christmas -- complete with the angels' glorious announcement of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds and the Three Wise Men recognizing the star in the sky and travelling to see the new born King.

At the end of the story she asked, "Now tell me, who was the first to know about the birth of Jesus?" (Pause)

A little girl raised her hand and answered simply, "Mary." How many of us missed that?

Sometimes we miss the obvious because we are expecting more complicated answers, all the while the real answer is simple and obvious.

We do this with God too. We tend to associate God with the spectacular, like the host of angels or the guiding star.

We can fail to notice God's presence and action in the ordinary and normal things of life.

It is important for us to take a moment to look at the ordinary things that we take for granted every day and see God's hand in them.

We just might miss the simple and profound reality of the day – that God loves us and that God is with us.

In our First Reading from Isaiah, “Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.” “Means God is with Us”

The Incarnation was something beyond any human expectation. It was never imagined that God would become man.

When the world was expecting a Messiah, who did they think would come?

Never in their wildness imagination did they ever think that God Himself would come as a baby.

The very idea that God would be conceived in a mother's womb, that God would take the road of infancy and childhood, makes this truth even more astounding.

God Himself incarnated for us, to save us, to be present with us, and give Himself to us as a baby.

Moreover, by coming in this way, He joined every human life, born and unborn, to Himself.

Christmas is, indeed, the feast of the dignity of every human life.

God chose to be mothered into humanity, to be conceived in Mary's womb, to be nine months inside her body. He came in weakness, in littleness, as a real baby.

He needed others' help. He was incapable of speech. He who was the very Word of God uttered no words. He was a real baby; He cried when He was hungry. At the same time, He did not cease being God.

Jesus came to tell us that God Loves You and me. In Jesus, we see the love, the compassion, the mercy, the seeking heart, the purity of God as nowhere else in all this world.

Maybe we should take a moment and ask ourselves, how do we expect God to come among us? How does God work among us?

Sometimes we feel that God is not with us, when in reality He is standing right by our side. We do not recognize His presence and action among us because we are looking for something else.

God comes in the ordinary, normal, daily circumstances of life. In the people, we see around us being born, growing up, growing old and dying – and in His

Real Presence in the form of bread and wine that become His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Meditate on how Mary and Joseph must have felt as they were holding God in their hands!

Meditate on how you feel when you hold God in your hands or tongue at Holy Communion!

Take time to listen and notice.

Often times, the things we seek are right beneath our noses.

Do not miss out on your blessing because it is not packaged the way that you expect.

What better way for Jesus to show His love and kindness to us than to be born a loving child who became the greatest Present ever given to humankind.

As we prepare for the birth of Jesus - we do so with love and giving of self.

Remember each one of us is a present
Maybe in disguise
But just a simple smile may bring
A sparkle to someone's eyes.

Ask Yourself:

- What kindness has been done for me in the past week?
- How did it connect me to God's love?
- How will I pass it on in the coming days before and after Christmas?

Christmas is the time to say "I love you"
And it should last all through the year!

Remember: "Love is what is in the room with you at Christmas, if you stop opening presents and listen."

**Come Lord Jesus Come, Fill Us with Your Love,
Now and Forever, Amen!**