

PASTOR'S CORNER

A Blessed and Merry Christmas



I reprint a favorite Christmas story that I have shared with you previously. A man saw a car hit a dog in front of his house on Christmas Eve night. The driver of the car, also a man, stopped to check on the animal. The dog, which was bleeding, hobbled from the street onto the sidewalk. As the two men approached the dog to help him, the dog took off and crawled into a space underneath the man's house, moaning all the while. The men knew they needed to get the dog to a veterinarian quickly if the dog was going to survive the injury. They tried to coax the dog out from under the house by calling after it and offering it food and water, but the dog wouldn't budge. The dog was traumatized and afraid. The men called the local Animal Shelter for help, but got a recording that the shelter was closed until after Christmas.

The man who owned the home said a short prayer and then thought to go inside his house and get his own dog. When he brought his dog outside, he pointed to the opening under the house and said, "There is a hurt dog under the house who needs your help." As if the dog understood exactly what was being asked of him, the dog crawled under the house. The two men heard the sound of whimpers and soft barks. After a time, the injured dog crawled out from under the house in great pain with the man's dog behind him, coaxing him and encouraging him. The two men took the dog to a veterinary hospital where a kindly veterinarian did emergency surgery which saved the dog's life. The dog was reunited with his owner on Christmas Day.

The homeowner gave his dog lots of hugs and treats for helping to save the life of the injured dog. When the man went to Mass on Christmas Day, he suddenly understood better than ever why Jesus became human. It took a dog to coax a wounded dog from hiding to healing. It took a God-man to bring redemption and healing to a broken and wounded world.

At Christmas, we celebrate the wonder that the God who created us humbled himself to become human in order to manifest his great love for us and initiate the plan for our salvation. When all the Christmas gifts are opened and all the celebrations complete, we are left with the true Reason for the Season: Jesus, Immanuel, God-with-us forever.

Jesus is with us in all the challenges we face, especially in this crazy year of 2020. On behalf of Fr. Thien and our Staff, we wish you a deeper embrace of the story of God being with us forever.

Have a very Blessed and Merry Christmas!

Father Joe