

Solemnity of the Birth of the Lord
December 25th, 2020
Cycle B

1st Reading: Isaiah 62:1 – 5.

God will once again rejoice in us.

Psalm Response: Psalm 89:4 – 5, 16 – 17, 29 (2a).

Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

2nd Reading: Acts of Apostles 13: 16 – 17, 22 – 25.

God's plan is brought to fulfillment with the birth of Jesus.

Gospel: Matthew 1: 18 – 25.

God's plan comes to fruition in spite of all obstacles.

God is good, **all the time**, All the Time, **God is good**.

Christmas is here, in spite of the pandemic, it came any way; and at a time when really need it. Is there anyone here who couldn't use a little more joy in their life? That certainly is what the birth of an infant brings to our life. The birth we are talking about is no ordinary birth as Paul reminds us in our reading from Acts.

People often talk about Christmas "as a time for children" and that is probably true in the secular sense; but remember that Jesus reminds us that we all must become like little children if we are to truly see and understand what this Incarnation, we celebrate tonight, is all about. Christmas is not a holyday for children, but in a strange, mystical way, children are born into our world to help us understand what the birth of the Christ means. Children, in reality, help us to understand what the birth of our Lord into our world really means even though they may not fully understand it themselves. When the time was right Emmanuel entered our world to make it right again. There is no greater gift God could have graced us with!

As we become adults, we lose our, or at least it seems to diminish, our sense of wonder and awe. Occasionally we are let in on it; but only the mystics live in it all the time. Children, however, can take us there. I remember a time early on in our marriage, John our son was about 1 1/2, and we were visiting my parents' home. Tradition there was the kitchen

door was locked while we eat supper. Then Santa would wrap on the door and make requests like sing or pray, or he might question what we were up to. Then magically it became very quiet and the youngest was always sent to try the door and go in and check out if it was safe. John was the youngest, and I remember it, as if it were yesterday, and it's 40 years ago. John entered and it was dark except for Christmas lights and all we heard from the living room was "OH WOW!" It is this kind of awe we need more of in our lives in order to see the abundance of Love that God has for each and every one of us.

Remembering the Christmas Story of the birth of Jesus reminds us of God's humility in placing complete trust in humankind out of an abundant love for us. This story never grows old! Coming to the table of the Lord to celebrate and receive the Eucharist reaffirms this great love story. St. Francis of Assisi said it well, "Out of love for us, God so humbles God-self that God hides under the little form of bread and wine." God longs to come to us. God longs for us to receive God, and God longs then to be a part of our lives, not only at Christmas but every second of every moment of everyday. Are you feeling the LOVE? God is one with us! St. Augustine says we should glory in this grace, of God with us, and proclaim it from the rooftops.

Merry Christmas, glad I am here to say that. One last thought: My favorite Christmas card has the statement on it: "On a dark night in turbulent times, God touched our world Quietly, Gently, and with Light;" Inside: "This Christmas we are once again reminded how deeply we are loved." On these darkest days of December I am reminded that light will always conquer darkness.

God is good, **all the time**, All the time, **God is good**