

Nativity of the Lord Vigil Mass 2014
(Deacon Pat Hall)

[Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:18-25](#)

Homilies are vehicles for breaking open the Word of God. First read the Sunday readings.

Well, our waiting in joyful hope has brought us to this vigil. We are poised and watchful on this Eve of the Nativity of our Lord. Tomorrow is Christmas, when we celebrate the Light that enters the world through a little baby, our infant Jesus, through whom all creation is made anew (2Cor 5:17).

Let us, tonight, treasure that feeling of expectancy.

It might be a little easier for me this season because Jan and I just went through that kind of experience two Saturdays ago. We had gotten word from my son, Adam in Switzerland, that his wife, Dina, was headed to the hospital...headed to the hospital to deliver their little baby.

And so we waited. We held vigil. Even though they were over 4000 miles away, Jan and I paced in our living room as if it was a waiting room.

And then on the next day, Sunday the 14th, Gaudete Sunday, we rejoiced upon receiving the news that our baby, Mia Rose, had come into the world, breathing our air with strong lungs and letting everyone know she was one to behold.

I was so thankful for the announcement. But I also want to treasure that anticipation we felt when we waited in sleepless vigil the previous night. It was in that anxious and hopeful expectation that I shared my heart with my grandchild, my daughter-in-law and my son. I was building ties with my granddaughter as my heart went out to her over and over again, although she was unseen and distant.

This was the third time this year, as we also held vigils for my daughter, Jennie, and daughter-in-law, Marianne, as they brought forth into our world little Ryan and Madeleine Grace. Do those little babies have any idea what they put their grampa through?

And yet, can I not bring some sense of that to tonight's vigil as we anticipate one of our most joyous feast days of the year? Can I anticipate looking at our manger scene at home tomorrow and hearing again, *"for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"*? (Lk 2:11)

Can I bring that sense of expectancy and vigil to the rest of my life in anticipation of our Lord's coming "again in glory to judge the living and the dead"? (Nicene Creed) What will that day be like? And what will eternity look like, when we are all restored in body and soul through the resurrection of Christ. (1Cor 15:35-54)

St. Augustine proclaimed, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee." (*Confessions*)

As we live our lives day to day, we are in constant vigil for our destiny. Our vigil is our pilgrimage as we daily praise and worship God, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. It is daily that we accompany each other on that walk, helping those who have stumbled, sharing with those in want and of course accepting humbly the help that others share with us in our frailty and need.

May our restless hearts put energy into our steps as we search for Christ, in our world today and for his second coming in ushering in the fullness of God's Kingdom.

May we bring that sense of anticipation when we come to our Lord's altar, to receive his true presence as he makes us one with him... and each other.

May we, this Christmas Eve, contemplate on the joy of babies, of new life, and of life everlasting.