



"FOR TODAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOR HAS BEEN
BORN FOR YOU WHO IS CHRIST AND LORD." — LK 2:11

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



St. Steven's Roman Catholic Church Mass Intentions

Christmas Eve, Thursday December 24th

Masses at 2, 4, 6 & 8 pm—Reservations Required

- † Marsh West
- † Caroline Campion
- † Dorothy Topel

For the People of St. Steven's

Christmas Day, Friday December 25th

Masses at 8, 10 am & 12 Noon—Reservations Required

- † Martin & Phyllis Sadler
- † James Rogan
- † Gerald Bollinger

Weekend of December 26th & 27th

Saturday at 4pm, Sunday at 8 & 10 am—Reservations Required

- † Steven Lamy
- For the People of St. Steven's
- † Larry Page
- † Patricia Kaiser
- † Diane Brass

Monday December 28th

8 am Mass —Virtual Mass Only

- † John Kemp

Tuesday December 29th

8am—Reservations Required

Special Intention for Patrick Arendi

Wed. December 30th
8am Mass—Virtual Only

- † Dorothy Topel

Thursday December 31st

8am Mass—Reservations Required

Special Intention for Marie Kociusko

Friday January 1st — Mary Mother of God
8 & 10 am Holy Day Mass—Reservations Required

- † Leighton Nickerson
- For the People of St. Stevens

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD/DECEMBER 25, 2019

One of the most beautiful things about the Christmas story is its human simplicity. How very ordinary! How relatable! We see a young family caught up in government regulations, encountering difficulty booking travel arrangements. We see a belated baby shower filled with the most unlikely attendees. Yet, if you attended Christmas Mass during the day, the Gospel does not contain the familiar story of over-crowded inns and hay-lined mangers.



It features something much more mysterious. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God ... all things came to be through him.” Matthew, Mark, and Luke give us the Christmas story from the human perspective. John’s Gospel tells the Christmas story from the divine perspective.

“What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race.” C.S. Lewis described Christmas as God parachuting down behind enemy lines. Jesus entered into a world darkened by sin, and it isn’t so different today. We can find it in the complications of our own lives and the lives of our families. We can find it in our cities, our nation, our world. But it wasn’t only the star that shone on Christmas night. “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

In the midst of all that is so very human — whether the humdrum or the horrible — “the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” No matter what we bring into this Christmas day, God enters our existence. He enters our experiences. When we allow God into our lives in a new way, when we surrender to Him our lingering areas of darkness, then we will “[see] his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth.” It’s time to welcome Him.

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LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the Week

“And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” These eloquent and poetic words remind us of why we are here today. This is profound news to hear, but is it the news we are looking to hear? A key to faith is found when we experience the beauty, wonder, intrigue, and joy when we hear that God’s very life and light has been revealed and made manifest to his people. In the manger, we also see the cross and the whole mystery of Christ revealed. It is a mystery that tells us not only who God is but who we are and how God asks us to live. Does this news have any real meaning for us? If so, after our family celebrations and gift giving, we need to get serious about constantly giving witness to Christ. We need to get serious about calling others to Christ by how we organize and execute the daily business of our lives. ©LPI



EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

The Disruption of the Incarnation

One December, my oldest son informed us that he would be getting up early on Christmas morning to serve breakfast to homeless people at the nearby shelter. We are a good Christian family, but we never before had that tradition. Christmas had been always the same: go to Mass on Christmas Eve, get up early, open presents, and reflect briefly on the fact that the day was a birthday celebration for Jesus. Then I would run off to my job back at the church. But that year, my son threw a wrench into the plan.

I can't say his siblings were too happy at first. When they woke up, he would be gone. If it were not bad enough that our family wasn't together at the crack of dawn on Christmas morning, they would have to wait to open presents until his return. To them, it didn't seem like this was about serving the poor at all ... it was about my son making Christmas morning all about him!

I couldn't be mad at my other children for feeling the way they did. It was a natural human response. When our routine is disrupted, we feel uneasy. When our expectations are not met, we feel a little cheated. When others stand in our way of happiness, even if they just delay it for a bit, we feel impatient. Of course, he went to the soup kitchen, and when he returned, everything unfolded as it usually does. And we were all proud of him.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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WHY DO WE DO THAT?—CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

Q

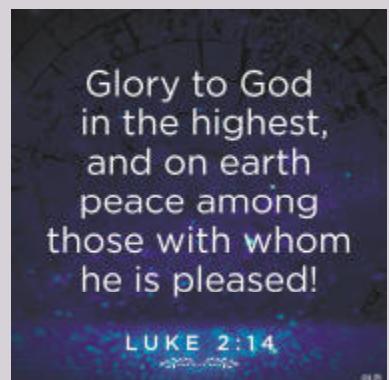
Question:

Why do we call Jesus "the light of the world"?

A

Answer:

In cultures around the world, light and darkness are chief symbols of good and evil, order and chaos, clarity and confusion, hope and despair. These symbols tap into something essential about the nature of things. God has given us the created world as a gift. His first work, as we see in Genesis 1, is to create light, giving meaning and insight to the abyss. It is in the light that rest of creation comes to be. A gathering darkness emerges in Genesis 3. Adam and Eve hide, shrouding themselves from the sun's rays and the gaze of God. While God offers a promise of salvation and establishes a covenant with His people, the sense of fog and dim understanding still remain. The Hebrew people repeatedly betray the promises they have made to God, and all around them the nations actively worship idols.



The promise of God is not in vain, however. In John 1, we see a depiction of Christ as primordial goodness, order, clarity, and hope. "The true light, which enlightens everyone was coming into the world ... this life was the light of the human race" (John 1: 9, 4). Think of the last sunrise you witnessed (if you could wake up for it!). As you watched the lavender brighten to rose edged with gold, did your heart swell? Did you recall the goodness of the world? Did you feel rekindled hope? Such is the role of Christ in the soul. Such is his coming Incarnate in our world.

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DECEMBER 25, 2020

The Nativity of the Lord

"I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all of the people." This year everything has changed. We, too, have waited in darkness, a new darkness of quarantine and fear. We, too, have felt in the desert of the modern world. Our hearts miss the candles of midnight Mass and sounds of everyone singing our favorite Christmas hymns. The Eucharist—that simple little host resting in the stable of our hearts—has new meaning. Our joy lifts at the sight of long-unseen family, now via facetime or zoom. The wonder of the season is here. Glory to God indeed!

But for some of us, perhaps the patterns feel too familiar, almost grating. Or someone is missing from our story this year. Unlike Mary and Joseph—who found refuge in a stable—



THE NATIVITY *of the Lord*

"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." - Lk 2:11

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCA

perhaps we still feel like we are searching for a place to rest. This Christmas season let Jesus be that place.

Let the Christmas story wash over you in all its human relevance. In the Holy Family, we see the fear of a first-time father trying to shelter and protect his family, a deeply vulnerable moment on a cold, uncomfortable night, and giving birth with little assistance. In the shepherds, we see an entirely unexpected encounter with wonder, a divine revelation none were expecting. We see the dazzling hope of a promise fulfilled.

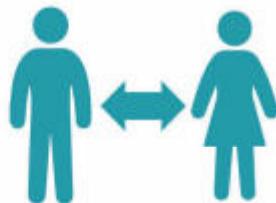
In the celebration of Christmas, we celebrate the Incarnation. God becomes man because we humans need someone we can touch, see, and feel. Some of us may be especially sensitive to a lack of incarnate love in our lives. Whatever our experience, God invites us to receive HIM - His story, His presence, His love. And He invites us to give it away, to make His love a little more incarnate in the world by our actions. Look for someone to love today that they, too, might recognize Emmanuel, God with us!

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3 EASY STEPS

TO KEEPING YOURSELF & OTHERS HEALTHY!

We are cautioned to be especially careful during the Coronavirus outbreak. Here are some simple ways to keep sickness away.



WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer frequently.

DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE

Especially around the eyes, nose and mouth. If you must sneeze, use a tissue or your arm.

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Practice social distancing during this epidemic and stay away from large groups. Instead, call, email or check up on family and friends using social media.



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." - Lk 2:10-11



COLOR

Read the Gospel of the week and color the image.





St. Steven's Roman Catholic Church

*is faith-filled and welcoming, sharing the love of the Eucharist
in celebration of the Glory of God*

www.saintstevensparish.org



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