



“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3.16).

Are you ready to celebrate this LOVE? Christmas came, Christ came, and no matter who was ready. God does not move into our lives because we are perfect, God moves in our lives to make us perfect. We may not be ready for Christmas but Christ is ready for us. Christmas is a story of love; the greatest love story ever told and ever lived. It is not a love story of a young boy and a girl but a love story of an Almighty God to humans. It's the story of God's sacrificial and unconditional love. Does your heart beat with the joy of being saved, freed and loved?

Gk Chesterton says, “Whatever else is true of man, man is not what he was meant to be.” Sexual abuse, immigration crisis, ecological crisis, terrorism, etc. they are all man made. God did not intend human beings to this but He created them to love. So, do we celebrate Christmas in these situations around us? Yes, we have the supernatural virtue called “Hope.”

St. Augustine says, “The Son of God became the Son of man, so that the sons of man could become the sons of God.” And Pope Francis says, so great is His love for us “that He became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with Him.” God willed the Incarnation as a free gift for the perfection of the human person and all of creation, not simply as a response to sin; St. Bonaventure applied his Trinitarian theology and Christology to explain how the created order of the universe reflects, relates, and returns to the divine order within God.

Love of God and love of neighbors was neglected by the chosen people as it is being neglected in our present time. Jesus came to renew these commandments that already existed in Old Testament; “Therefore you shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength” (Dt. 6:5) and “Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countrymen. You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lv. 19:18).

Love is a decision to put God first; to be loyal to him, to place His will and interest above our own, put others (neighbors) second and ourselves last. We have the example of being a good neighbor through the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). The Good Samaritan sees a wounded man and stops, gets down from his horse, cleans and bandages the wounds, takes him to inn for better care, returns to visit and to know about his well-being. He personally gets

involved in the life of the wounded man. So, true love is getting involved. We live in the wounded world, with wounded people, we are ourselves are wounded and only the Wounded Healer (Jesus) can heal our wounds. Therefore, Love is our greatest calling because God loved us first (1 John 4:19) and second, we have hope of eternal life (1 John 2:25).

It's not easy to love God; for we are tempted to worship so many idols, like; possession, pleasure and power. Jesus is the best model to love God and our neighbors. He Loved God the father by the way; He related to everyone, He allowed the little children to come to him, He welcomed Mary Magdalen's gesture of hospitality, He showed compassion to the woman caught in adultery, He let his beloved disciple to rest his head on his chest, He was obedient to his father to the point of Cross, He sacrificed His life for us all. This is how He lived the love of God the Father among humans and showed them to love one another as He loved. Christmas is a time to put the WORD first- back to the center. Why should we put God's Word first? "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (Jn 1:1-2). If the Word was in the beginning (in Greek Arche, meaning first), then who has been given the authority on this earth to put Him second?

Christmas is God's gift to us (God gifting His only Son), Mary's gift of her womb, Joseph accepts Mary as wife and Jesus as his son, Shepherds adore and accept him as promised messiah and Magi offer Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. What's your gift for the birthday Boy? We exchange gifts to each other but we really forget the Boy whose birthday we celebrate. What gift does He want? "What does it profit me if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world and He is not born in my heart" says Alexander Pope-British Poet. "They presented Him gold, frankincense and myrrh. These are not the gifts Jesus asks of us. From the treasure of hearts, Jesus asks that we give of ourselves" says Thomas S Monson. Allow Jesus to be born in your heart, in your life. We say Love is the reason for the season. Radiate the love of Jesus to others. Jesus took his place in a manger so we might have a home in heaven. So, take the LOVE from the manger and share Him with the people at home, with people in your office and with the people in the world.



LOVE came down from Heaven to create love among humans...May we live in His LOVE.