

## **Christmas Day Homily (SJ&QA)**

After four weeks of Advent waiting, preparing and praying for Christ's birth, Christmas has come. Today the angels are bringing us the good news of great joy for all the people, for to us is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, God's greatest gift to humanity. We remember this best gift that we ever received. It is the gift of love. It is the gift of the Father who sends his Son to the world. *"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."* It is also the gift of the Son who chooses to make his dwelling among us, to become like us, that we may become like him. *But how can we become like him if we do not know him well?* It is said, knowledge is important in order for us to appreciate and love a person.

For the past advent season we were challenged to review our lives as a way of readying ourselves well for Jesus' birthday. Socrates said, "KNOW THY SELF, *"An unexamined life is not worth living."* For the past years the church has been inviting us to live our Christian identity. We may have a lot of information and technical know-how of a lot of things, but it is a sad reality that we do not know our faith well. *No one can search for God for you!* The search for God is something personal and non-transferable! We cannot delegate our religious duties and obligations to others. Neither can we blame others if we don't have God in our life. We need to be on our feet to search for God, we need a star to

guide us—no longer the star of Bethlehem but the light of faith. We need to search the scriptures and we need the sacraments for they lead us to Jesus.

*“For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son.”* What return can we give to the Lord for all the goodness he has done for us? In response to this great love, we give love in return. Love begets love. It is so easy to show our love in action when we know that we are loved. We see this on Christmas morning when children feel more than on any day of the year that they are loved. They wake up opening the gifts of their parents and loved ones. They treasure this memory, and when they become adults, they themselves will only be too happy to give love. The love that God showed us through his son is Good News of great joy for all of us. As people of God we have a claim to the joy and the peace that the birth of Jesus brings to the world. *But how do I personally enter into this "great joy" of Christmas?* Christmas rings out "joy to the world," yes, *but how do I make this joy my own?* This is an important question, for, even though God has declared joy to the whole world, there are still many among us who do not flow in this joy, many among us who do not know how to claim this joy and make it their own personally. Christ's presence is a sharing presence. Jesus did not come to get but to give. And St. John said, *“From his fullness we have all received and share grace upon grace.”*

We are recipients of God's great generosity in Jesus. We are asked to extend his sharing presence to others, especially to the needy. In a world where we live in a culture of having Christmas remind us that as believers of Christ we need to promote a culture of sharing. We will never be lacking in gifts to share, no matter how poor we are. As scripture says, *'No one is so poor as to have nothing to give.'* And when it most seems we have nothing, we can always *"give Jesus"* to others by our love. If we live this way, then the blessings and joy of Christmas will remain with us and spread through us.

As we look at the millions of lights that surround us on this Christmas day, may we welcome the invitation which Jesus addressed to each of his disciples: *"You are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before all, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."* **Amen!**