

DECEMBER 24, 2021  
Vigil Mass for the Nativity of the Lord  
Luke 2: 1-16

“LORD AND KING BORN IN A MANGER.”

“We often learn the most from our children. There is an old story about a man who punished his 3-year-old daughter for wasting a roll of gold wrapping paper. Money was tight, and he became infuriated when the child tried to decorate a box to put under the Christmas tree. Nevertheless, the little girl brought the gift to her father the next morning and said, ‘This is for you, Daddy.’ The father was embarrassed by his earlier overreaction once he realized the gift was for him. He opened the gift, but his anger flared again when he found that the box was empty. He yelled at her, ‘Don't you know that when you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside of it?’ The little girl looked up at him with tears in her eyes and said, ‘Oh, Daddy it's not empty. I blew plenty of kisses into the box. All for you, Daddy.’ The father was crushed. He put his arms around his little girl, and he begged her forgiveness. He kept that gold box by his bed for years. Whenever he was discouraged, he would take out an imaginary kiss and remember the love of the child who had put it there. In a very real sense, each of us has been given a gold container filled with unconditional love and kisses from God at this Christmas.”<sup>1</sup>

As today we celebrate the Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord, we recall this night wherein Mary and Joseph travel eighty miles from their place of Nazareth to Bethlehem, the hometown of Joseph because he was descendant of David. As Caesar Augustus decreed that all should be registered, taken every fourteen years to assess taxation and to know who will be eligible for compulsory military service. This was a most inconvenient time and physically hard for Mary as she was due to give birth. They were settled in the most primitive accommodations, a cave used as a stall for animals as Bethlehem was

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<sup>1</sup> stories4homilies.blogspot.com

overcrowded. Despite all of this, the baby was born and became the light in the middle of the night and darkness.

“Today’s first reading from Isaiah reminds us that Christmas is a feast of light. No doubt it is we who have caused the darkness in our lives, our sins, our indifference, and lack of love towards our brothers and sisters have cast a shadow on our lives. The way God scatters the darkness is by letting ‘a child be born for us, a son given to us.’ God reveals himself not through power but through a small frail weak child. Nighttime is usually a time of fear and evil, but this night is different. It is a Silent night, a Holy night, a night made divine by the presence of God in our midst. God's ways are different from our ways. He, the Most Exalted One, condescends for the sake of the lowly and the oppressed. The Lord descended not in pomp and majesty befitting a King, but in meekness and lowliness to show us the way of perfect love.”<sup>2</sup>

My dear sisters and brothers, as we celebrate Christmas amidst pandemic, uncertainties, difficulties, and challenges, let us be hopeful as the Light was born to us, to guide, strengthen and show us the way. May His birth motivate us to bring glad tidings to the poor, unloved and alone so that we too may be the light to others. Let us ask in this Eucharist that this night be filled with the light of love given and love received, and hope, humility, compassion reflected in our own lives. Like the girl in our story, let us shower love and kisses to our parents, children, to your wife and husband and all people.

Let this be our prayer: “Glory to you, God in the highest, for bringing hope, love, and peace on earth in the person of the Baby Jesus, our joy, and our life. May we remain with you, the Light and Star of our lives. May we always be humble as you are our perfect example of humility, Lord and King born in a manger. Thank you for taking our humanity for us to have eternal life. Amen.”

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<sup>2</sup> ibid