

Christmas 2022
St. William Champion
Isaiah 9.1-6//Titus 2.11-14//Luke 2.1-14
Midnight Mass Readings at all Masses

→recently I took note of some new behaviors that I am beginning to exhibit...three in particular.

→first...I noticed that I seem to be listening to “talk radio” more often these days...especially when I am in the car.

→secondly...it seems almost certain that when I am out to dinner these days that the conversation will inevitably include a discussion about all of the different medications everyone is taking....

→and finally...often when reading the newspaper I find myself turning first to the obituary page to see who has died.

→now...none of those are odd behaviors or habits in and of themselves...but what I’ve realized is that....

→.....I am becoming like my parents and probably could star in one of those ***“we can’t stop you from becoming your parents”*** commercials...which by the way I think are the most entertaining commercials on television...whoever thought of that campaign has really hit a home run!

→because in many ways.....all of us.....eventually become our parents even if we don’t want to admit it...

→[and] I don't think we plan to...I don't think we set out to...and I don't think we intend to...rather...it kind of just happens...doesn't it?

→...we say...do...and feel...things that we **never thought** we would do...say...or...feel!

→and this kind of automatically happens....and had it not been for those eye-opening commercials most of us would have not even noticed this happening to us

→i.o.w. we don't seek out the **reason why they happen**...but rather we just accept it as it is.

→and tonight [today] we celebrate exactly the same thing.

→for centuries...theologians, historians, philosophers, and scholars have argued, debated, written, and theorized about the **reason why** Jesus came to earth.

PAUSE

→what would make God send his Son to us as a human being.

→why would HE do such a thing...

→the theories and speculations are numerous....

→some say the reason Jesus came to us and was born was due to sin...to bring salvation and take away the sins of the world

→others say it was the only way we could understand our destiny to heaven and eternal life

→still others...to explain suffering and pain...and give healing and hope

→but most would say it was because of **love**...God entered the world as one of us to show us what it means to be **loved** and **to love**.

PAUSE

→I am reminded of a story I once heard that perhaps illustrates what Christmas truly means....

→it seems as if one night a long time ago a woman was sitting in front of her fireplace....all alone....thinking about the Christmas story we just heard

→the more she thought about it...the more improbable she thought it was...given the state of the world

→why would God, creator of the universe, decide to become human and live among us...she thought

→and if God actually did decide to do this...why would he choose to be born in total poverty in a shelter among animals....

→the whole thing simply didn't make sense...she thought...in fact it seemed absurd and even ridiculous

→well just then..... she was interrupted by a strange sound outside

→she couldn't imagine what it was..... so she went to the window to look outside and there in the moonlight on the snow covered lawn she saw about a dozen geese...staggering about, dazed and confused....crying out frantically

→the geese had apparently dropped out of the flight formation of a larger flock heading south for the winter

→well..... the sight of the exhausted geese stumbling about in the cold snow moved the woman to pity

→she put on her coat, went outside and opened the door to her warm garage...all the while trying to herd the geese into it

→but the more she tried to help them...the more frightened they became...and soon they were scattered all across the lawn

→instead of helping them...she was making matters worse

→finally after 20 minutes of trying..... the woman gave up

→as she stood there in the moonlight looking at the frightened geese..... she realized that they had no idea that she was trying to help them...no idea that she was their friend and not their enemy...

→and then a strange thought came to her....she thought that..... if just for a minute ---she could become one of them...an ordinary goose...and talk to them in their language...about what she was trying to do...they might understand.....

→and then it hit her....that is what Christmas is all about

→it's about God looking from heaven upon the human race, staggering around ...frightened and confused...wanting to help...and love and care for us....

→it's about God becoming one of us...and giving to us the power to do for each other what God has done for us....

PAUSE

→on this night [day] when perhaps we are overwhelmed with what Christmas appears to be...or what we hope it might be...

→perhaps it would do us well to remember the actual reason for Christmas...

→God joining us around our trees...at our table...in our homes... and in a manger

→...to pick us up when we are down...to celebrate with us when we are joyful and...to be with us always...as we journey through life

PAUSE

→[you know]...I kind of like listening to talk radio...talking about the meds I take...and looking to see who has embraced eternal life...

→[I guess] we can't stop ourselves from becoming our parents...just as we can't stop God from becoming one of us and being with us

→and why....would we ever want too...