

Young Adult Reflection December 27, 2009

Christmas Greetings to all:

Christmas is so important in our Catholic belief system, that we celebrate it until January 10th – the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. So as we continue the Christmas season, with the Feast of the Holy Family, I hope that the blessings of our God are with you.

Fr. Jim McDougall

+ A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke

The parents of Jesus used to go every year to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, and when he was twelve they went up for the celebration as was their custom. As they were returning at the end of the feast, the child Jesus remained behind unknown to his parents. Thinking he was in the party, they continued their journey for a day, looking for him among their relatives and acquaintances.

Not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem in search of him. On the third day they came upon him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. All who heard him were amazed at his intelligence and his answers.

When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him: "Son, why have you done this to us? You see that your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow." He said to them: "Why did you search for me? Did you not know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not grasp what he said to them.

He went down with them then, and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother meanwhile kept all these things in memory. Jesus, for his part, progressed steadily in wisdom and age and grace before God and men.

The gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION

It was time for the annual Nativity pageant put on by the children of the parish. The manger was located in front of the altar steps. Mary was there in a blue mantel and Joseph in a cotton beard. The wise men were there with a handful of shepherds, and of course, in the midst of them all was the Christ Child, lying on the straw. The nativity story was read by the pastor with carols sung at the appropriate places, and all went like clockwork until it came time for the arrival of the angels—a "heavenly host" of the children of the congregation dressed in white and scattered throughout the pews with their parents.

At the right moment the angels were supposed to come forward and gather around the manger to sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men," and that is just what they did – except there were so many angels that there was a fair amount of crowding and jockeying for position. One angel, about nine years old who was smaller than most of the other angels, ended up so far out on the fringes of things that not even by craning her neck and standing on tiptoe could she see what was going on. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men," they all sang on cue, and then in the momentary pause that followed, the small girl electrified the entire church by crying out in a voice shrill with irritation and frustration and enormous sadness at having her view blocked, " Let Jesus show!"

The wise pastor decided to end the pageant right there. "Let Jesus show!" the child-angel had cried out, and while the congregation sat in stunned silence, the good father offered a quick final prayer and blessing, and everybody filed out of church with those unforgettable words ringing in their ears.

May the little angel's cry be our prayer in the year ahead: "Let Jesus show!" in our homes and work places and schools; "Let Jesus show!" in our compassion, forgiveness and joy. May we not "lose" Jesus in the many demands on our time; may we not "hide" Jesus when the difficult decision has to be made; may we not "pack" Jesus away until next Christmas, but may the "Word made flesh" make his dwelling place among us here, now and always, illuminating every one of our days with his wisdom and grace.