

Church of the Divine Love

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 2, 2022

10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence after the candles are lit

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #93 – **Angels from the realms of glory** (extra verse on facing page)

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Jeremiah 31:7-14**

Psalm 84

Second Lesson: **Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a**

Gradual Hymn #109 – **The first Nowell vs. 1,2,5&6**

Gospel: **Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

General Thanksgivings pages 836, 837

Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #124 – **What star is this**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer B page 367

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 362

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn – **#421 – All glory be to God on high**

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn **#102 – Once in royal David's city**

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday January 2nd, 2022

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 84; Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19a; Matthew 2: 13-15,19-23

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

With the birth of Jesus God entrusts God's self to humanity. God becomes one of us and lives among us. God comes to us as we are. The world does not get cleaned up, sanitized, and made presentable for the birth of Jesus. The Christmas story is not one of preparing the nursery, painting the walls, and making it look cute. It is a story that reveals the truth about God and humanity. That God comes to us as a newborn offers us a new beginning. It also reminds us that the divine life is vulnerable, fragile, and needs to be cared for and protected. There is nothing sentimental or romantic about Matthew's version of the Christmas story. It's reality life.

Before we can celebrate the Epiphany light, the arrival of the wise men and the manifestation of the Christ to the world, we must first remember and acknowledge the darkness of our world. That's what the reordering of the story does for us. Today's story reminds us that Herod is real, not only in Jesus' time but in ours as well. I don't know if the slaughter of the innocents happened the way Matthew describes it, but I know it is a true story. It has been lived in every age throughout history. I don't know if Herod really killed all those babies, but I know that the Herod's of this world will always seek to destroy life, that which is holy and sacred.

Herod is in the news every day. You won't see or hear his name, but you'll recognize him. He's hard to miss. He's in some of our families and relationships. He's in some of our own words, actions, and choices. Herod is our indifference that prevents compassion, our hate and anger that destroy love, our

busyness and distractions that deny presence, our violence and anxiety that defeat peace, our inhumanity that negates our creation in the image and likeness of God, and our politics when it is narrow, self-serving, discriminatory, and exclusive. Our world and sometimes our lives are full of Herod.

Today's gospel will not let us deny Herod's existence. That doesn't, however, mean that all is lost. It means that the world of Herod is the world into which Jesus is born. The world of Herod is the world in which Jesus puts our lives back together. The world of Herod is the world in which Jesus reveals God is with us and for us. To see Herod before the wise men invites us to move from the darkness of today's gospel to the light of Epiphany. Herod's darkness is not the final reality. Darkness will not prevail. That means, however, that each of us, just like Joseph, has both the opportunity and the responsibility to guard the divine life and protect that which is holy and sacred. That life, that holiness, that sacredness is not only about Jesus it's also about you and me. It's about our lives and our relationships. It's about people we know and people we've never met. It's about the infinite ways in which the divine life is entrusted to all of us. This divine life is the gift of God for the people of God.

Look at your life. Where do you see holiness? What's sacred? In what ways is God entrusting himself to you? Don't give me soft, vague, and mushy answers like love, peace, or happiness. I don't want that. I want names. I want places. I want events. I'm not trying to limit or restrict God's holiness and presence. I'm trying to get us to see the flesh and blood God born on Christmas, an embodied God, a God that comes to us in ways as unique as are each of our lives. So be specific. God is. God comes to us in very tangible ways. Where is God showing up in your life? How? In or by whom? Call them by name. Picture their faces. Return to the places.

Perhaps it's in your marriage, your husband or wife, and the life you have created together. Maybe it's the child or grandchild God has entrusted to you. Maybe it's the holiness of a best friend. Maybe it's an early morning cup of coffee and the silence of divine presence. Maybe it's in reading the scriptures. Maybe you experience the liturgy as the joining of heaven to earth and earth to heaven. For many it will be the beauty of nature: a sunrise in which you offer yourself to God, a sunset in which you give thanks for your life and those you love, or a starry sky and the realization that everything you see speaks of God. For some of you the ordinary routine of work becomes the place in which your life and God's life intersect. Maybe studying is a way in which God entrusts himself to you. You read, think, question, pray, and your eyes open to a new way of seeing. It might be your prayer group, shared intimacy, and the experience that wherever two or three are gathered Christ is there. For some it will be your passion for the poor, feeding the hungry, speaking out for justice, or visiting the sick or dying. I know many of you experience the sacredness of your work around this parish; preparing and setting up for the liturgy, fixing meals for the sick or grieving, working in the office, caring for the building, or helping run our parish school.

Every one of you could add to my list. There are thousands and thousands of ways in which God offers his life to us, entrusting us with that which is holy and sacred. With each gift God says, "Here, this is yours. Care for it. Guard and protect it. Nurture it. I trust this to you. I have no one else. You are Joseph. You are the one to do this." So how do we care for and protect that life, beauty, and holiness in a world of Herod? It has to begin with waking up to the presence of God in our lives. Isn't that what Joseph did? Isn't that what he always does? He did it before Jesus was born and he does it again today. Before Jesus was born Joseph had decided to quietly dismiss Mary. It was a matter of life and death. But a dream and an awakening would reveal that Mary's child was of the Icon of St. Joseph and Jesus Holy Spirit, so he

took Mary as his wife and named the child Jesus. Today Joseph has another dream and another awakening, and again it is a matter of life and death. "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt...; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

When it comes to the holy life of God with us, Emmanuel, Jesus, it is always a matter of life and death; the child's, each other's, our own. God has entrusted his Son to each one of us in a variety of ways. Just like Joseph we stand in the middle between Jesus and Herod, between life and death, between the life-giver and the life-taker. No one gets to ride the fence, however. We can't stay in the middle. Each one of us chooses. Day by day, minute by minute, we choose. Over and over again we choose. Will we get up and take the child and his mother or will we sleep through and miss what God is doing in our lives? What will it be for you? For me? What are we choosing? Are we nurturing and growing the life of Christ within us? How are we caring for the sacred pieces and parts of our lives? How are we creating a home for Jesus?

When I'm a dreamer my eyes, ears, heart, and spirit are open and receptive. I find and discover things about the world, others, and myself that I never knew before. All paths are open, and life becomes a daring and holy adventure. I feel safe in the uncertainties, led by the unknowing, and drawn by a goal I did not set for myself. Each day offers the possibility of the impossible.

When I'm a searcher, however, my eyes and ears are closed, my heart is hard, and my spirit is resistant. I stand in opposition to the world, others, and even myself. There is only one way, my way. I set goals for myself and agendas for my life, and no one, not even the Child, better get in my way. There's no room for surprise, spontaneity, or the possibility of more life. I'm more interested in the ways things used to be than how they might be. I feel afraid, abandoned, angry, and at risk. We are two days into this new year, and I wonder, in what ways are you a dreamer and in what ways are you a searcher? Dreamers like Joseph are grounded in a reality more real than the illusions of searchers like Herod. It's the reality of faith, hope, and love. It's the reality that the future is always better, not because it necessary will be, but because it might be. It's the reality of Emmanuel, God with us. Will 2022 be different from and better than 2021? I don't know but maybe that's the wrong question to be asking. Maybe we ought to be looking at ourselves instead of the year to come. Will we, in 2022, be different from and better than how we were in 2021? Will we be dreamers, or will we be searchers?

Don't be too anxious or distracted by Herod. Remember, neither God nor Joseph dealt directly with Herod. They didn't give Herod time, attention, or effort. Maybe we shouldn't either. That doesn't mean we deny or ignore the Herod's of our lives. It means, rather, that we gain more by nurturing, feeding, and growing the divine life. It means that our work is to cultivate deep relationships, a life of prayer, and love for all people. It means that in the end holiness always wins.

Happy new year to all of you and be blessed in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you,

from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that
with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may
worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

Prayer for the New Year:

O God our Creator, you have divided our life into days

and seasons, and called us to acknowledge your providence year after year. Accept our praise and thanksgiving for this past year and hear our prayers for the new year. Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, Jesus. Grant that we who begin this year in his Name, may complete it to his honor and glory. Pardon our transgressions of the past and guide us by your Holy Spirit that we may turn our feet into your paths, serve you in peace, and live in your presence. All this we ask in the holy name of your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Masks are required during the service.

SUNDAY – 2 CHRISTMAS	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
MONDAY	8:00 AM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:00 PM	AA MEETING	
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
SUNDAY – 1 EPIPHANY/THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD			
	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
11:15 AM	VESTRY MEETING		

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23RD – PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

SUPPORT THE FOOD DRIVE – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN