



Daily Reflections

CHRISTMAS IS NOT A DAY; IT IS A SEASON

By Sr. Katherine "Kit" Gray, CSJ

Reflection

Christmas is more than a day. It is a season in which to enter more deeply into the mystery of the Incarnation, to reflect deeply on Jesus, the One who came to become one of us. The Christmas season begins on December 25, Christmas Day, when we celebrate the birth of Christ and in this liturgical year, ends on January 8, when we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus, the beginning of his public ministry.

Incarnation comes from the Latin "in carne" which means "enfleshment." According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Belief in the Incarnation is the distinctive sign of Christian faith." (CC 463) "Incarnation" is "shorthand" for the belief that the Divine chose to become one of us. In Jesus, God is not only Transcendent, but also wholly Immanent, Emmanuel, God-with-us. While remaining Transcendent (beyond the range of normal or physical experience), He is at the same time Immanent (fully present in the physical world and accessible to humans in various ways).

The document *Gaudium et Spes*, from the Second Vatican Council, is more concrete: “For by His incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every human. He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, He has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin.” (*Gaudium et Spes* #22)

Scripture

“The word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

JOHN 1:14

In his Letter to the Philippians, St. Paul offers an eloquent description of the Incarnation:

*...Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness;
and found human in appearance,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.
Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.*



Reflection

“He worked with human hands, He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart.”

How does this description of Jesus bring you closer to him?

Prayer

*Lord, Jesus Christ,
You became human and took on the realities of humanity in our world.
During Your life on earth, You gave hope, perspective, and salvation to many.
Your words are challenging, uplifting, encouraging, and guiding.
At the end of your earthly life here in our world,
You took upon yourself all suffering and made the cross a sign of hope.
At this time when the whole world is suffering,
when people are isolated and left to themselves,
when people mourn for their loved ones,
when people are sacrificing their physical and psychological strength*

*to help others,
we pray in solidarity and entrust ourselves to You.
Amen.*

ADAPTED FROM PRAYERS BY SISTER ULRIKE M., SDS -- AUSTRIA; SISTERS OF THE
DIVINE SAVIOR

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