Nativity of the Lord — December 25, 2022

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

The woman working in the giftw-wrap department neatly made the final fold in the red paper, fastened it with a piece of tape, and passed the package back over the counter to the customer. As she did, she glanced at the long line of people waiting with Christmas gifts to be wrapped, each person burdened with items hastily purchased and wearing that strained and impatient "I'm tired" and-in a hurry look." To no one in particular, and to everyone in general, she sighed, "Isn't it terrible what's happened to Christmas?"

We know of course, what she meant. The birth of Jesus Christ, the coming into our world of the Word made flesh, what the writer of Titus calls, "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior," all of this has been nearly lost beneath the mad rush of buying and wrapping, fighting traffic, standing in line, and beating the deadline at the post office. We no longer count the days of Advent, but rather the "shopping days until Christmas." The angels' song "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace," is now a merchandising background music heard through a tiny department store speaker, surrounded by the ringing of cash registers. "Isn't it terrible," she sighed, "what's happened to Christmas?" "Yes" we say, "It's terrible, if only we could get back to the real meaning of Christmas."

When we talk about getting back to the "real" meaning of Christmas, what we mean, of course, is the religious": meaning. After all, Christmas is the celebration of the birth of our Lord. Christmas is about what God in Christ is doing in and for the world, the joy, the grace, and the hope for peace which the birth of Jesus brings into our lives. These are religious convictions, spiritual truths., and Christmas is a holy day. It seems to us to be a sad failure that Christmas must now take place in a materialistic environment which obscures its genuine splendor. Small wonder that we yearn to go back to the real, and religious meaning of Christmas.

As strange as it may sound, though, whenever we think this was, whenever we long to have a Christmas as pure and as holy and as innocent as the scenes on our Christmas cards, we run the danger of missing the whole point of Christmas. The true meaning of Christmas is that God entered the real world of flesh and blood in Jesus Christ.

So, next time we hear the angels' song being sung above our heads as we push our shopping carts down the discount store aisle, we can know this was the way the world first heard that music, as it went about its weary and worldly business. And as we look around us at the long lines and the people whose eyes betray their many burdens, glimpsing the tired clerk as she pushes back her perspiration - soaked hair, we can know that the news of Christmas is truly for them, and for us, too."To you is born this day a Savior."

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**December 27**	**11:00AM**
Dorita Villar † (birthday)		Villar Family
Wed.	**December 28**	**11:00AM**
Bill Valli †		ICF #14
Thur.	**December 29**	**11:00AM**
Thanksgiving		Ed & Mae
Fri.	**December 30**	**11:00AM**
Matt Airoldi †		Gallo Family
Sat.	**December 31**	**4:30PM**
Deborah Ghirardo †		Bill & Diane
Sun.	**January 1st**	**9:00AM**
People of the Parish		
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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