

CHRISTMAS

December 25

Gospel: (Luke 2:1-14)

Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child and she gave birth to her firstborn Son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were shepherds living in the fields and keeping watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold I bring you good news of great joy...for a savior has been born for you who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

Reflection:

Why do we wish each other "Merry Christmas"? Surely, not because Jesus was born into a perfect world and not because we have a perfect world or perfect families today. "Merry Christmas"? Perhaps not for all. But because of Jesus, *all* of us can celebrate a Christmas that is joyful and blessed. The Savior of the world was born during the night of the year when darkness is the longest. Jesus comes for the people in dark places. The real, lasting, and deep joy is that the Light shines there. That is why we can say to each other "Merry Christmas"! (Living Liturgy, p.24)

Vincenzian Meditation:

In working to restore all things in Christ we are not alone. God is with us: Emmanuel. His poor also are close to us. May we never forget that the ultimate source of hope and joy for the poor lies in our sharing with them our own deep personal conviction, born of prayer, that with the birth of Christ the Kingdom of God has come; a kingdom of justice, of love and of peace. May your celebration of Christmas be a joyful one! (McCullen, Deep Down Things, p. 366)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence*)

In what ways have we shared with the poor our own deep personal conviction of the kingdom of God?

Closing Prayer:

On this day, joy was reborn into the world,

-may we share the joy of Christ with everyone.

On this day, hope was reborn into the world,

-may we bring the hope of Christ to those who are poor.

On this day, love was reborn into the world,

--may we bring the love of Christ to our family and our world.

Amen

