

“Where Does Christ Have to Be Born Again?”

Christmas 2010 Homily Rev. Dennis A. Dirkx

Where does Jesus Christ have to be born again? This is an unlikely question to ask on the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord. Warner Sallman’s painting “Christ at Heart’s Door” answers the question very pointedly—in our hearts. The unusual thing about the painting is that there is no doorknob on the outside of the door because this door can only be opened from within. Jesus Christ needs to be born again in our hearts, but only we can open the door of our hearts to let Him in. May we not say, “There is no room in the inn.”

Jesus, who is the Light of the World, comes to enlighten everyone. There is nowhere this Light does not shine. It can pierce the stoniest recesses of the heart. It must, however, be consciously chosen. Jesus does not force Himself in where He is not invited. Once we make the choice to let Jesus into our hearts then the Light of Jesus Christ will shine in us. We are not the Light. We are illumined by the True Light and we testify to it, inviting others into its brilliance, but we know we are not the Light. When this Light shines brightly in our lives Christ is born again and again and again. This is Christmas happening anew.

Like Mary who brought forth the Savior this night (this day) we are to bring forth Christ the Savior first into our hearts, our minds and our souls and then into our relationships. When He is the foundation of every relationship we have, we will know that when we feed the hungry we have fed Him; when we give drink to the thirsty we have given to Him; in clothing the naked we have clothed Jesus with our compassion; in welcoming the stranger we have welcomed Him; in caring for the sick we have attended Him; in visiting those in prison we have visited Him who dwells within others. “As long as we have done it unto the least of these, we have done it unto Him.” To find the least among us we must look not only into the faces of the poor, but into the faces of our spouses, our children, our parents, our neighbors, and our fellow workers.

This is Christmas come alive not just for a day, but for a lifetime. Let us shout it from the roof tops that Jesus Christ is born again because we’ve let Him into our hearts. This is the good news of great joy the angels will sing—that Jesus is born again, a Savior. Once again the angels will sing, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Is it possible for Jesus Christ to be born again? Yes! In fact, we are at the brink of this transformation, if only we open the doors to our hearts and let Him in. We have the power to bring Christ into the center of our lives. All that it takes is a simple "YES."

Lawrence Ferlinghetti once wrote these words:

Christ climbed down
From His bare Tree
This year
And softly stole away into
Some anonymous Mary's womb again
Where in the darkest night
Of everybody's anonymous soul
He awaits again
An unimaginable and impossibly
Immaculate Reconception
The very craziest
Of Second Comings.

Let Him in!