

Christmas Eve 2024
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney

Titus 2.11-15 ***St. Luke 2.1-14***

✠

Our friend, Saint Paul, had a way with words. In his Letter to Titus, who later became the first Bishop of Crete, he gives Titus some practical pastoral advice, and to never stop telling the Good News about Jesus Christ to all who will listen. Paul then calls Christians a peculiar people.

We use the word peculiar today to describe someone or something we think is strange, unusual, or weird. That's not what Paul means. In the more modern language of the Good News Bible, we get a better idea of what it means for us to be a peculiar people.

Paul writes God has revealed himself to us through his Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, whose birth we celebrate tonight with hymns of joy and praise. The "child for us sinners" will grow up to give himself for us. He will rescue us from darkness and evil and bring us into light. And God will make us a pure people who belong to him alone. We must always act for the good of others.

The birth of Jesus is the story of the *INCARNATION*...the Word made Flesh...God became a human baby boy...born in a barn...the humblest of births. He is our *EMMANUEL...GOD WITH US*. He is the Light of John's Gospel we will hear at the conclusion of tonight's Mass. He leads the world out of darkness and sin and death...and the Light of Christ can never be put out. Jesus the boy learned to walk among us so one day we might walk with him in heaven...forever.

The Christmas Story is one we must not keep to ourselves...we must tell others...we must be willing to share the truth of the Gospel...and God's love for mankind...in a world desperate for peace and order.

Tonight we join with the Angels and Saints of Luke's Gospel and shout *GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN, AND PEACE ON EARTH TO THOSE WITH WHOM HE IS PLEASED!* We see his glory (light)...the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

O come, Let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

✠