

Fr. Carlos' homily at Midnight Mass

Born in a stable, wrapped in swaddling clothes a child is born to us, witnessed by poor shepherd tending their sheep in a lonely night. Is this a cause for celebration? Countless number of children in the past and even now are born in worst conditions. In contrast great men and women born in palaces, conquerors of worlds, powerful in their own

time, unsurpassed prowess in war and skills to build kingdoms. Yet these greats are now relegated to history's greats whereas the obscure child born in a manger welcomed by poor shepherd remain in the consciousness of millions and millions of people from his birth on till our times, and he has affected the way many live their lives.

Scholars have made attempts to relegate this child called Jesus to the history of the past but failed to do so. They want to find the

historical Jesus. We extol the great by making them historical figures to be admire but the child, without being one of the greats, have influenced the lives of many and intrigued those who have heard of him. And so a third of humanity commemorate this obscure birth.

It's power is mysterious and a mystery. Christmas could not be understood as a mere occurrence. It is first and foremost understood through the lens of faith. The identity of the child cannot be established by being born in a manger. Christmas is a flashback from cross and resurrection. Only in this way could we established the identity of the child, the Messiah, God's anointed. We celebrate Christmas because we know by faith that it is this very same child that was raised on the cross and this same child was raised to the throne of God. Separate Christmas from the salvific events of the future.. will not make any sense regarding the birth of the child.

His followers refuse to give in to the sadness and tragedy in the world and rejoices at the birth of this child. But in our faith we rejoice because we know that this child is the same child of the Father who gave us new and eternal life. He freed us from death caused by our sins and gave us pardon and eterna life. Because of the child's future we celebrate his birth. His birth is more profound than our experience of joy or sadness. Christmas is beyond one's personal state of well being or despair. Christmas does not become happier due to an economic boom nor is it any gloomier because of the dire poverty of peoples or nations. Christmas stands on the firmest ground of happiness and joy and our experience of tragedies and the violence of war does not negate the fact that we have solid reason to

rejoice. Peace to earth and to all men of good will is a promise that is guaranteed. Christmas has given human beings a deep seated hope for the future, in his ironically speaking, his death. The Christmas message is that even if we don't feel good about ourselves

God still feels good about us. Christmas is more beautiful than our tinsels and colorful lights. It is more profound than our greetings.

Christmas is when God says all belong to HIM. The outcome is inevitable. Finiteness is swallowed by infinity. And these seemingly long years of human existence will give way to eternity. There will be no more noble dreams and aspirations, of longings and desires for they will all become insignificant when we enter into Christmas. When the angels sang their Gloria they did so because they knew this child

will offer himself one day for the sake of all humanity. Maybe these

angels were present at the Cross and the Resurrection and that is why, the great rejoicing. This is what they are rejoicing about. They were at the presence of the Savior of all humankind. These two great events in the child's future is the foundation of the joy of Christmas. MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.