

We are often told by those wiser than ourselves that we need to meet people half way
However, I'm sure this has happened to you - you didn't have to meet someone half way; you had to meet them almost all the way

Blessed Mother Theresa didn't wait for the poor, diseased, and dying to come to the front door of the convent to take care of them - she went out into the streets of Calcutta, met them there, and had them brought back to the convent to care for them

The poor and dying of Calcutta were not able to get to the convent on their own for treatment and care

We are in the same boat - ever since the Fall of Adam and Eve, none of us can heal ourselves of our sins - our human nature is corrupted - it no longer has the original full goodness that God created us with - we were all bound for Hell - we were outside of the Garden of Eden and we were outside the Garden of Heaven

So the Second Person of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus, was enjoying chilling out with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit in Heaven - However, God the Father asked God the Son if He was willing to leave heaven where there is no pain to come to a place where suffering would be all around Him and in Him, especially on the Cross

God the Son saw all the human souls that have ever lived and will ever live, loved them, and decided to do whatever it took save them while still respecting our free will

This is why it was necessary for the Word of God to become flesh - We needed a savior who could reconcile us with God - the eternal Word became flesh for us so He could offer His life as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world through the shedding of His blood on the cross - so He took on our human nature and was conceived in the womb of Mary

The Word became flesh to show us the infinite love and tender mercy of God for us sinners - we know God loves us and that we should choose God and the Good, but we have such an attraction to evil

The battle between sin and love is constant - St. Paul says in his letter to the Romans, "For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. The willing is ready at hand, but doing the good is not. For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. So, then, I discover the principle that when I want to do right, evil is at hand."

Our lives, our battle to be the person God created us to be, can often feel like the Viking's football season - we just can't get the momentum going in the right direction

But Jesus, in His incarnation, in His death and resurrection, came so that getting out of the rut is now possible

This is what we celebrate on this solemnity of Christmas - Jesus Christ is our redeemer who reigns in heaven and who also lives and reigns in our hearts through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit

We celebrate the birth of the newborn Messiah King and His manifestation to Israel and to the Gentile nations

We thank and bless God for the way in which he has saved us from the power of sin and the curse of death and destruction by sending His Son to ransom us and give us pardon and abundant life through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit

In the Incarnation Jesus takes on our humanity - through Jesus' Resurrection we take on His divinity

This is a big deal - it is such a big deal that some theologians think it is the very reason Satan became who he is - they think it is the very reason we are in the state we are in

As we know from the Book of Revelations, Satan used to be Lucifer, the “Angel of Light” the greatest creature in all of creation - but at some point Lucifer rebelled and took some disobedient angels with him who became demons

Now no offense to you or me, but in the natural order of things, God sits above His creation with the angels right below Him - thus the angels are naturally the highest created beings - we human beings come below the angels - after us come the animals, then the plants, and then all the inanimate objects

God told Lucifer that He was eventually going to take on human nature, raising humanity above the angels - He explained to Lucifer that the angels were created to serve not just God, but also humanity - so even though angels are higher beings in creation, humanity is the center of creation

Lucifer became jealous and rebelled against God and God’s plan to raise up human nature above the angels

So Lucifer, now Satan, and the rebellious angels went to war with the good angels of God - Satan and the rebellious angels, the demons, were cast out of heaven

From that day forward, Satan has done everything he can to prevent us from being raised above the angels, from being with God in heaven

Now it’s dangerous to say things like this because all know people who already think the world revolves around them, but in some ways they are right - all of creation revolves around us - God created all things so that we could know Him, have our sins forgiven, choose His love, and be with Him forever in heaven

All of creation, when used in the way God intended, points us back to God and back to His love and forgiveness

Today we celebrate the birthday of our King and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

God wants to fill our hearts anew with joy and gratitude for the greatest gift he could possibly give us - His beloved son Jesus
What a great gift indeed - God sends Himself as our redeemer - this should give us such joy - a joy that should imbue the lives of all Christians - it is this joy that Pope Francis talks about again and again in his writings

When we have the joy of God in our hearts then we will have nothing to fear - we will be able to heed Jesus’ words, “Do not be afraid”

As we joyfully celebrate Jesus’ First Coming, we will be able to confidently look forward to our final judgment

We need to go out to John in the desert - we need to admit our sins and our faults - we may even need to visit the Sacrament of Confession

However, today we are called to celebrate that God does not leave us there - God meets us all the way - He takes on our humanity - He comes to where we are so that we can take on His divinity and be where He is

This is the Good News of the Gospel - this is why the angels were singing on high - this is what the shepherds were so excited about - this is what had Mary and Joseph stupefied in wonder - this is what had King Herod worried

We are no longer doomed to Hell - we can choose Christ and His love - we can choose to go to Heaven - and this is the reason for our joy

Merry Christmas