

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

John 1:1-18

HOMILY

I have found myself asking the very same question many people have been asking me over and over again in the last few days: *How was your Christmas?* We tend to ask this question because to a great extent we are unfortunately an event ‘*driven people*.’ For which reason we tend to limit Christmas to an event that comes and goes.

That’s where St. John’s understanding of Christmas, and indeed of life and humanity is so different even different from other Gospels where the evangelists tend to be eventful. In the Gospel of John there are no events depicting angels, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, stars or wise men.

He starts his Gospel with the statement of the first book of the Bible: ‘*In the beginning was the Word.*’ This, for St. John, is the Christmas story.

The story is set in the context of creation, “*In the beginning.*” It means that for John, creation is not an event of the past but the ongoing life of God with his people. Christmas is God continuing to give life to his people. ‘*And the Word became flesh and lived among us.*’ Christmas is the *festival of re-creation*. It is God, all the more, giving God’s own life to his people.

The implications of the word becoming flesh are very profound.

It means God ‘en-fleshes’ the way we live, our actions, and our words.

In this way Christmas cannot be limited to an event that comes and goes.

Christmas therefore becomes a life to be lived, a way of being. Thus Christmas is more properly understood as a verb rather than a noun.

So maybe, as someone said, we should stop asking, “*How was your Christmas?*” Instead we should be asking, “*How are you ‘Christmassing?’*” We are being asked to answer certain questions such as:

- Are you recognizing the Word become flesh in your own life?
- Are you recognizing the Word become flesh in the lives of others?

The Word became flesh and has never ceased living among us.

The Word became flesh and will never cease living among us.

So, our task is to make way

- wherever we go,
- whatever we are doing,
- whoever we are with, for the rooting of God in our lives.

Make way for the image of God. Even after the Christmas trees and decorations are gone, please Christmas your way through life.