

## Reflection for Saturday 2 January 2021

### The commemoration of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen

In the early years of the Church believers pondered over the question as to the identity of Jesus and how he could be truly divine. Some wondered whether the divine nature of Jesus was added on to him at a later date rather than from the moment of his conception in Mary's womb. The two fourth century saints, we are commemorating today, were friends who were bound together by their desire to witness to the truth of Christmas: that God became one of us in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity was born in the usual way.

The famous carol, "O come all ye faithful" that we have not been able to sing this year because of the restrictions has the verse, "God of God, Light of light, Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb, very God, begotten not created." The carol puts it, in words from the same time Basil and Gregory were teaching that Jesus is God from God. God came down to us, laying aside his glory, being born as one of us. God in Jesus Christ is shared among us. A life that is being shared like the light of a candle being used to light another candle – spreading flame without making that first light any less bright. These saints, we're commemorating today, tell us that Christmas is about God sharing himself, holding nothing back, giving the fulness of his life.

St Paul in his letter to the Philippians puts it like this, chapter 2vs5,6&7. "Have this in mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

As we read the Christmas story again, we should ask ourselves how does Christmas define who God is for us?

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