

## Christmas 2007 • Christ the King

Merry Christmas, everyone. This is a beautiful time of the year. It is a time to celebrate family and friends, it is a time of warmth and welcome.

“The people who walk in darkness has seen a great light.” We are people of that light, but we are also people who find that light in a world of darkness. When we attune ourselves to the Light of the Lord, when we are guided by His light, we become people of Sonlight.

This is all poetic, but how do we attain the focus we need in a world of chaos, confusion, in a world of darkness?

The answer is Jesus. For the Christian, the answer to all questions about life is Jesus.

Let’s look at his life. Born in poverty. Hunted as an infant. Mocked as an adult and crucified for loving others, he brought kindness and peace to those who allowed him into their lives. **He would not allow darkness to overcome him.** He would not become cynical. He would not succumb to hatred. He would not let selfishness determine his choices. **He lived to love.** He would not give up on love or give up on anyone for that matter.

When he sacrificed so much of himself for others, when he dropped everything to heal a man’s dying servant, to raise a widow’s son, to restore dignity to a prostitute and integrity to a thieving tax collector, when he gave and gave until he had not more life to give, he did all in a loving way, a kind way. There is no evidence of him ever being mean, cold or nasty. He never rejected anyone; he welcomed all. That is what Jesus was like. That’s how we who call ourselves Christians must be.

For many, Christmas is a time of sadness, a time of more intense darkness. Some of us have lost loved ones and miss them intensely during the holidays. What would Jesus be like if he was there, with the grieving spouse, the stricken parent? Would he say, “Get over it, move on with life.” I don’t think so. What would Jesus

be like? Well, he wept at Lazarus' tomb, didn't he. He would cry, and hug, and love and not be concerned with the words he said, just with being present supporting and loving those whose grief is intensified at Christmas. If we can be loving in this way, if we can be like the Lord in this way, then we will be the Light in the middle of a dark world.

Some are feel that the darkness they experience at Christmas or throughout the year is because they are not welcome or accepted. Did Jesus only love a few, the worthy, the elite? No, he threw open wide the doors of grace, and loves everyone and anyone. He prepares a place at the crib, the cross and the Table for all. Jesus never turned anyone away.

So?

Are you divorced?

Are you married with kids, worrying for them and committed to their welfare?

Are you married for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or more times?

Are you a single parent, struggling to make ends meet?

Are you gay or lesbian?

Well, if you are, you have a place here, because you belong to Christ. Christ welcomes all to the crib, the cross and the Table!

Are you lonely?

Are you a single man or woman?

Are you looking for a companion?

Are you disabled or disfigured?

Have you run out of luck?

Are you living with shame in your life?

Well, if you are, you have a place here, because you belong to Christ. Christ welcomes all to the crib, the cross and the Table!

Maybe you are an immigrant?

Are you full of doubt today, like Thomas?

Has it been awhile since you have darkened the doorway of a church?

Are you a regular here, and continue to struggle with where faith 'fits' in your life or are you full of faith and enthusiastic for the parish?

Well, if you are, you have a place here, because you belong to Christ.  
Christ welcomes all to the crib, the cross and the Table!

Are you in your advanced years, fearing the future?  
Are you middle aged and seeking meaning?  
Are you a young adult wondering where you fit in the church?  
Are you a high school student, trying to make sense of the faith  
of your parents?  
Are you in your in middle school or grade school looking for  
friends?

Well, if you are, you have a place here, because you belong to Christ.  
Christ welcomes all to the crib, the cross and the Table!

If you didn't hear yourself mentioned, you too are welcome.  
You have a place here, because you belong to Christ. Christ welcomes  
all to the crib, the cross and the table!

**When we allow the Divine Sunlight to shine through us, when we  
welcome all as Jesus does, when we treasure the Presence of God  
with us, Emmanuel, we see clearly. And the Divine Sunlight  
conquers the darkness.**

*Adapted from Divine Starlight by Fr. Joseph Pelligrino (<http://www.st.ignatius.net/12-25-07.html>)*