

Homily Summary – Christmas 2025

Short Overview: Christmas is not about materialism, gifts, or consumerism, but about the profound mystery of God's infinite love: the Incarnation, where the eternal Son of God became a humble, vulnerable baby in Bethlehem to save us. We are invited to be swept up in God's love rather than worldly distractions, to adore the Christ Child as Emmanuel (God-with-us), and to find hope even in humble or painful circumstances, knowing Jesus shares our humanity fully.

Main Points:

- Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus as proof of God's boundless love; He became flesh to rescue us at any cost, entering poverty and pain to show He will go anywhere for our salvation.
- Jesus came not to be served but to serve, born humbly in a manger to make Himself approachable, especially as a little child who melts hearts and heals feelings of being unwanted or left out.
- The first Christmas was simple and poor, mirroring the lives of Mary and Joseph—encouraging those experiencing humble, difficult, or grief-filled holidays that closeness to Jesus is found in such moments.
- God became man to save us from sin and death, revealing His mercy and making us His children, brothers and sisters in love and solidarity.
- The liturgical year spirals deeper into faith; this Christmas invites us to grow closer to God, continuing reflection through the season (Holy Family, Mary Mother of God).

Key Bible Verses

- Matthew 1:23 – "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.'" (Fulfilled in Jesus' birth.)
- John 1:14 (implied) – "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."
- Luke 2:7 (referenced) – Mary "wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger."
- Philippians 2:7 (echoed) – Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

Catechism References

- CCC 457 – "The Word became flesh for us in order to save us by reconciling us with God."
- CCC 461 – The Incarnation is the Son of God assuming human nature to accomplish our salvation.
- CCC 525 – Jesus' birth in Bethlehem reveals the humility of God.
- CCC 479 – The eternal Word became incarnate without losing His divine nature.

Reflection Questions:

- Amid the busyness of Christmas, how can I let myself be "swept up" in God's infinite love rather than materialism?
- Where in my life do I feel "left out" or unwanted? How does Jesus, born with "no room in the inn," want to heal that today?
- If your Christmas feels humble, poor, or tinged with grief, how might embracing that bring you closer to Mary, Joseph, and the Christ Child?
- What "gift" of myself—perhaps service, forgiveness, or deeper prayer - can I offer to the Baby Jesus this year?
- How can this Christmas spiral me deeper into relationship with God, as we continue celebrating through the season?

Rhyme summary: With joy we greet this Christmas day, may it see many children happily at play. But beyond the gifts and shiny cheer, God Himself is drawing near. Not born in wealth or royal might, but poor and small this holy night. He comes to serve, to save, to stay, to love us in a humble way. So run like shepherds, wise men too, adore this Child who's born for you, Emmanuel, God-with-us still, to heal our wounds and broken will. If Christmas feels both hard and small, then you're closest to Christ - so you can stand tall. Let Jesus fill each heart and home. Merry Christmas to everyone, and may God's peace be known!

Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Psalm 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>