

What is it you need for Christmas? A difficult question in our day when many of us are not in want. It can be tough to buy things for others. We do we really need. We don't long for a new pair of shoes, or new dress, for Christmas as our parents, grandparents did.

What is it you need for Christmas? It is why you are here. In this place. Not celebrating Christmas like the world, but to rightly celebrate Christmas here. For what other true Christmas celebration than to celebrate Christ Mass, to keep the ancient Feast.

What is it you need for Christmas? Our lives are a mess. We are mess. We have broken dreams. Broken families, broken hearts. We hurt those we love. We neglect our duty. Realize what you desperately need for Christmas in forgiveness poured out as **the Word became flesh**. We need the Word made flesh to be given as a sacrifice for our sins. This blessed Word that speaks all things into creation. This same Word speaks us forgiven and restored. His Word does what it is sent to do. Still the Word of grace comes to absolve the repentant who seek His grace.

He calls us back, He speaks us clean. No price too great to have you, not even the life of the Son of God, the blood of God to be poured out

What is it you need for Christmas? We dream much. Many of your wishes, your desires, what you long for in family, time with loved ones separated by distance or by death will not take place here. **the Word became flesh** as an answer to all your prayers, to satisfy all your Christmas dreams, if not in these years, it will be soon, in the life to come. Because the Word made flesh, our flesh will receive His reward in due time. Last night and today, we have a mere glimpse of heaven on earth, imagine what its like to celebrate Christmas in heaven, what our loved ones in Christ already behold. Do you think the Word became flesh will allow your tears and hurt to remain?

What is it you need for Christmas? Ask St. Paul, **when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared**, - when the Word became flesh - **he saved us, not because of works done by us in- but according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit**, - Holy Baptism; Paul ties our Lord's birth to our birth at the font. We should put Christmas decorations there at the font. **Whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs**

according to the hope of eternal life. A gift of a baptismal life, a daily fresh start, His eternal gift in you, giving you there what the Word made flesh has come to do.

What is it you need for Christmas? Ask St. John. **the Word became flesh.** That's John's version of the Christmas story. No angels, no journey to Bethlehem, no shepherds, no kings or wise men. For John, A God who comes to us; do not think you must ascend to God, that you must conquer heaven by works, or make a commitment to get there, or just be better than average, or better than the next guy, or impress the Lord. Salvation is not found in heaven but descended into our filth, to give us life. He is both the Shepherd and the Lamb. Take everything else about Christmas away, and you still have that. Even if all the carols, the lights, the trees, the gifts disappear, **the Word became flesh.**

What is it you need for Christmas? The Christmass. For the Word became flesh and He is not done. Still working in you, still working in His church. This Word does what He came to do. The last Word has not been spoken. Still the waters of baptism wash over His people, still His Word calls bread and wine to be Himself, the Bread of heaven. Bethlehem, means 'house of bread.' No coincidence He lacked a crib, placed into a feeding trough. He joins Himself to you. Cradle Him in your hands and mouth. Marvel at that. How great that gift in the Supper.

What is it you need for Christmas? **The Word made flesh.** That's joy in the midst of sadness, life in the midst of death, hope in the midst of despair. God in the midst of men. The Word became flesh. The only thing that endures for Christmas. Here we are with our struggles and burdens to celebrate the birth, sing with angels, to keep the ancient feast. Rejoice and feast this Holy Christmas day. Rejoice even though you celebrate it in the valley of the shadow of death. Indeed rejoice all the more for this reason. Let the darkness of this world, even your own sin be drowned out in the enlightening joy of Christ, He has conquers death by His death and resurrection, Indeed, our loved ones, those separated from death rejoice and join us this day in the Christmass.

What is it you need for Christmas? In this family of His creation here, in this sacred place, He gives you everything you need for Christmas, today, and throughout the year.