

Just before Christmas wife told her husband, "Honey last night I had this dream that you gave me a diamond necklace for Christmas. Honey what do you think it means.?"

The husband thought for a moment then said, "You will find out soon".

The wife was very happy thinking that her plan to trick her husband to buy a diamond necklace was working well. But she did not stop here. Every morning for next couple of days before Christmas she continued to tell the husband the same dream. And the husband always said, "You will find out soon". And finally, Christmas arrived and husband gave the wife a nicely wrapped box for Christmas gift. Hurriedly, with excitement and trembling hands she opened the box which looked very much like a jewelry box. Inside the box there was a --- what -----? A book titled "The Meaning of Dreams"

Just like this wife, most of you might have or will receive some gift or other at this Christmas.

Christmas is after all a celebration of God's gift. God giving us his own son as a free gift for our salvation.

Christmas is a gift of love, gift of peace and gift of happiness. Christmas is a time to be happy and make others to be happy.

Jesus is the biggest gift God gives us. And just as we express our love for people by giving them gifts, God shows us just how much he loves us by giving us His most precious gift - His Son.

And the Son of God Jesus Christ came on earth, not as a powerful prince, living in a fine mansion in the most powerful nation on earth. Rather he came as the foster son of a poor carpenter, to be born in an outhouse in one of the weakest nations on earth, a nation ruled by the Roman emperor, a nation paying taxes to a hated foreign occupying power. When he arrived in our world, he was not met or visited by dignitaries, generals, or celebrities. He was greeted and visited by poor shepherds, probably smelly and unwashed. But it was to those shepherds that God gave his good and wonderful news: 'I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by the whole people.'

Choosing such people on the margins as the first to receive the Christmas message, shows that God's love is not focused on the rich and famous and powerful, the movers and shakers of this world and the manipulators of markets. But on ordinary simple people.

This vital truth is illustrated by the condition of the Christ-child himself. The sign the shepherds are to look for is a baby wrapped in rags and lying in a manger, the feed box of animals.

Today is a beautiful day as we think about God's love for us. Who would ever imagine, in his/her wildest dreams, that God who made the entire universe and holds it all together would love us so much that he would become one of us in his Son, Jesus? God's love for us is, we could say, crazy and makes no sense. We cannot properly understand or comprehend God's love doing this for us because it is out of this world. Today we are very happy to celebrate what is out of this world, God's love for us, becoming part of this world when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

In a nutshell, Jesus was born to us and among us, so that we might be born in a new way. Born to live like sons and daughters of the God who is particularly caring about the poor, the deprived, the lonely, the lost, the grieving, and the heart-broken!

He invites us to look at and respond to the hundreds and thousands of needy and human

beings who won't be having even a tiny fraction of what you and I will be enjoying at our Christmas celebrations today.

Since I began my homily with a dream of one wife, let me close my sermon with another dream of another wife. This woman was none other than Mary wife of Joseph. One morning Mary told Joseph about her dream. She said, "Joseph, in my dream I saw that it was a birthday celebration of our son Jesus. Which people called Christmas. People have been preparing for six weeks for this celebration- decorating the house with lights and flowers, Christmas trees etc. They were wearing new clothes. Giving each other gifts wrapped in gift wrap. But Joseph I did not see any one giving any gift to our son though they were celebrating his birthday. No one paid attention to our son who was lying in the crib. I woke up Joseph with tears in my eyes".

There was no room for Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in the inn the first Christmas (Luke 2:6). Are you making room for Jesus, Mary, Joseph in the inn of your heart this Christmas.? Even now people are celebrating Christmas without Christ. Will you make room in the inn of your heart for Jesus this Christmas and every day?

So, what gift are you going to give to new born Jesus on his birthday? Are you going to wipe the tears from a mother's eyes?