



*For unto you is born this day ...
A Savior*

Luke 2:11

Christmas 2011



A young child was once heard by her folks saying that she likes Christmas because that's when they'd have this nice party in her house; when she gets to see Uncle Tom and Grandma Isabelle and when she gets to play with her cousins in the snow and especially because she gets presents, lots of them.

Just like that child, there are many reasons why Christmas remains so dear in our hearts. For the most part, it is a time for gathering! It is an occasion of re-engaging with those in our different circles of relationships; especially with those who have been absent from us due to distance or other reasons. It is a time for lots of hilarious tokens of jubilation and perhaps a trip to Squaw Valley.

Christmas is also a time for gifting! I personally could relate to that exuberance many feel when they open their presents; gifts that may include a Hallmark card that plays "Joy to the World" or the widely wished for gift of the ever-elusive iPad 2. Indeed, many look forward to Christmas because of gifts and presents that lately had been quite overwhelming on the giver's side.

Indeed, Christmas could be all about fun; a gathering and the exchanging of presents or offering toasts for a year of pleasant accomplishments. But viewed from the Christian lens of faith, it becomes a time for transformation. It becomes a season of hope for those confronted by brokenness. It becomes a time of renewal for a disengaged world.

More importantly, Christmas is about the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. It is our celebration of God's perfect gift of love. It is that gift which we ought to share to others. It is our gifting of love to that special someone; or to those families suffering from natural calamities; or the gift to that child who is awed by all the glitters that continue to shine in her broken world. These are the gifts we'll cherish in our lives. As your pastor here at Ascension, I am truly gifted to be in the company of Christians who are bold enough to face the challenges that may face us in the ensuing year and confident enough to move on and become the people of God that we all can be.

On behalf of my family and Ascension Episcopal Church, I wish you all a merry and holy Christmas, and for an occasion for you to share God's gift of love to others! God bless you and yours on this holy-day season!

In His Service,

Father Bayani

