



DECEMBER 25, 2016 - THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS) - MASS DURING THE DAY Gospel JN 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.

Spiritual Reflection: Christian Music Artist Mathew West in his Christmas song "Leaving Heaven" reminds his listeners that God chose to leave the Heavenly Paradise to save us. His refrain is particularly powerful: "*I'm gonna walk around that broken Earth - Trading in these streets of gold - So if you ever wonder how much you're worth - You should know - That you're the reason why I'm leaving Heaven.*" This is a good reminder that God's coming to earth was more of a rescue mission taken on out of love and not a vacation to visit with friends.

Spiritual Questions

1. How does the story of Adam and Eve relate to the Christmas story?
2. What did God leave behind in order to save us?
3. What did God encounter on earth that He would not have encountered in heaven?
4. What motivates God's actions?
5. How can you testify to the light?