

December 27, 2020 - Feast of the Holy Family

When Advent first began we talked to you about waiting and how sometimes it was hard. Waiting for your birthday, waiting for your soccer game, waiting for your turn for a ride at King's Island, waiting for Christmas. But what if you had to wait years and years and years! Now that would be hard.

In today's gospel reading we meet a man named Simeon and a woman named Anna. They lived a very long time ago in the city of Jerusalem. When Simeon was a young man, he was told by God that someday he would see Jesus the Son of God. Simeon waited years for that to happen. It was maybe 80 or 90 years that he waited. Simeon would often go to the temple in Jerusalem hoping that that is where he would find Jesus.

According to Hebrew tradition, parents were to bring their newborn son to the temple for a blessing. Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple and also 2 turtle doves or 2 pigeons to be offered in thanksgiving for their son. This was according to Hebrew tradition.

Now this same day Simeon felt that God wanted him to go to the temple. He felt that this day something special was going to happen. When he got to the temple he was immediately drawn to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. He knew right away who that baby was and he took him from his mother's arms and he looked into the eyes of that baby. He was so excited he did not know what to say, so he sang. Mary and Joseph must have been so surprised to have this older man reach out for their son, hold him and tell them so many amazing things that Jesus would do. Also there was Anna, an elderly woman who never left the temple. She too came forward and spoke about this special child in such a way that it amazed his parents and others around them.

Mary and Joseph, just like all Hebrew parents of the time, finished their prayers, offered their sacrifice and thanked God for their newborn son. Both Simeon and Anna felt that being able to see and hold Jesus was worth the long WAIT.



Today we celebrate families, not just the Holy Family, but all families. Think about your family and how you celebrated Christmas, how you help each other almost every day and how special you are to each other.

God the Father,

Thank you for my family; help us to love and respect each other. I ask you to guide us and bless us so that we may serve you by helping others. All things are possible if we pray and listen to the words of Jesus. Amen



Around the same time that Joseph and Mary were beginning their journey to Bethlehem, there was a boy about 10 years old who had to leave school to work with his father. This boy loved to sing; he sang when he was home and he sang to the sheep because he just knew that one day he would sing before a very important person. The father did not like to hear

him talk like that so he sent his son to work for a very rich man. The boy continued to sing to the sheep and he tried to sing for the rich man. But the rich man said that it was silly for him to sing and even sillier for him to think it would ever be for an important person. The man was always making fun of him. “You wear rags for clothes and sleep with sheep: your voice will never be heard”.

The boy soon grew tired of the way he was treated, left the farm and headed to the city of Bethlehem. He continued to sing for anyone who walked by the corner where he gathered with other homeless people who begged from the passerbys. Although people thought he had a beautiful voice, they too made fun of him because of his tattered and torn clothes. Soon soldiers came and rounded up the homeless to get them out of the city. The boy was frightened and ran away and hid outside the walls of the city.

He found a place to hide and soon fell asleep. Later that night he was awakened by a very bright light. He walked to the top of the hill and sat down on a big rock. He looked up into the brightness of the sky and once again felt like singing. He sang the songs his mother had taught him, the songs he sang to the sheep. When he finished singing, he heard someone coming. Before he could hide the men saw him and came toward him. When he saw that they were shepherds and not soldiers, he was not as

afraid. They told him that they had seen a bright light in the sky and they were told to follow it. The shepherds saw that the boy was young and cold so they gave him a cloak and asked him to come with them.

The boy walked with the shepherds, following the light until they came to the stable where they heard a baby crying. Once again the boy felt that he had to sing. He sang the song his mother had sung to his baby brother. After a few minutes the baby stopped his crying. His mother and father thanked the boy for his beautiful song. The shepherds invited the boy to come work with them. They wanted to hear more of his singing. As they were leaving the stable, the baby's father came to the boy and said, "Tonight you sang for the King of Kings, the Son of God". Just like Simeon, the shepherd boy fulfilled his wish. He did sing for someone important, he sang for a KING.



Think about this. Jesus came to be with the homeless, the poor, those who were overlooked, those who were made fun of and chased away. Jesus loves us not for how we look or what kind of job we may have, but for how we treat and help others. All of us are special to Jesus. You are special to Jesus.

Want to test to see how much you know? Circle the correct answer.

There was a wreath at church during Advent. It had how many candles?

7

4

2

There was a man in the desert eating locust and honey and baptizing people. What was his name?

King Herod

Abraham

John the Baptist

Who appeared to Mary to tell her she would be the mother of the Son of God?

Angel

God

her mother

Who were the first people to see Jesus after he was born?

Kings

shepherds

farmers

What was the bright light that showed them where they could find Jesus?

Star

moon

sun

Who did Jesus, Mary and Joseph meet in the temple?

James and John

Elizabeth

Simeon and Anna

What offering did Mary and Joseph make at the temple?

A calf

pigeons

2 chickens

What did the Shepherd boy do when he was with the sheep?

Play

dance

sing

Who did the boy run and hide from?

Innkeeper

soldiers

priests

The Shepherd boy did finally sing for someone very important. Who did he sing for?

Soldier

sheep

Jesus

Look for the answers next week.

Happy New Year!