



Christ the Savior is born Ha Nacido Cristo el Salvador

Christmas 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings! Last week you read in the bulletin Søren Kierkegaard's Parable of The King and the Maiden. For Kierkegaard, "It is only in love that the unequal can be made equal," thus the king "clothed himself as a beggar . . . It was no mere disguise, but a new identity he took on. He renounced the throne to win her hand."

One of the four Papal Basilicas in Rome is the Mary Major (Maria Maggiore). The focal point of the Basilica is a mosaic on the triumphal arch high above the main altar, is the image of a lavishly decorated throne, which is empty. It brings to mind the mystery of the incarnation. Jesus, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, left his heavenly throne when, out of infinite love, he came to dwell among us. As St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians (2:5-8) wrote, "Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross," and thereby became our salvation.

In that Basilica another powerful item that refers to the Incarnation is the crib the pieces of which were used by Mary for the baby Jesus. There's also the image of the magi bringing their gifts for the Child. And of course, the mystery of the Incarnation, God becoming one of us is most present in the altar of sacrifice. The location of the empty throne mosaic right above the altar constantly reminds us that Christ continues incarnation, by coming down to dwell among us at every Eucharist. The empty throne indicates that God fulfills his promise to King David through the Prophet Nathan, to King Ahaz through the Prophet Isaiah in the birth of Jesus Christ on the first Christmas Day.

Dear friends, Jesus Christ has come down from his throne to encounter us, in our family, in our neighborhood, in our community, in our Parish, with his intimacy in our loneliness, with his mercy in our sinfulness, with his healing in our brokenness. May the graces and blessings of Christmas be with you and your family. Merry Christmas!

In the Heart of Christ,

Fr. Gene Sabio, MSC
Pastor