

Christmas 2024 – Luke 2:1-14/15-20

In our Advent reflection booklet by Janet Schaeffler Christmas, she quotes a story from Leo Tolstoy, ***Martin the Cobbler***.

Martin is a lonely shoemaker who is promised, in a dream, that Christ will come to visit. The next day, Martin rises early, gets his shop ready, and waits. Throughout the day he has three visitors: an old man begging for rest which Martin gives him a room which he had prepared for Jesus. The next is an older woman asking for food and he gives her the food he had prepared for Jesus. The third visitor is a young boy who is lost and Martin takes him to his home worrying that he will miss Jesus again because of these visitors.

That night Martin asks the Lord, "Where were you? I waited all day for you." The Lord replies: "Three times I came to your friendly door." And Jesus answers us, "I was an elderly person and you delivered food to my home. I was just out of prison and you not only found me a job but transportation. I just had an operation and you provided a place for me to recover. I was a resident at Margaret Hall down the road and you visited me and brought me communion. My clothes were dirty and you provided a place where I could get them clean and even take a shower. I was a student at your school and was provided with a top notch education so that I could continue on and get a scholarship through my basketball skills at your other top notch high school. And the list goes on.

In ***Give Us This Day*** reflection, Micah Kiel writes that "God becoming flesh is something that was so unexpected that even his own people did not accept him. Only the outsiders like the magi from the East, the untrustworthy shepherds, the poor that includes Mary, seem to have recognized his true significance."

Micah Kiel quotes Saint Oscar Romero who, "...captures the audacity of Christmas when he says that the Incarnation is not universal. Jesus was incarnate specifically among the poor, which sets a task for us. We are supposed to become incarnate in the world of the poor and share their fate, just as Jesus did." Micah Kiel Challenges us with his reflection: "Christmas is not here to make us feel good, but to give the divine model of a ***Christlike-life***. Am I willing to share the fate of the poor?"