



Christmas Homily for Midnight Mass

December 25, 2025

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As we gather here tonight, under the cloak of the darkness of midnight, we are drawn into the sacred mystery of Christmas. This is a night where time seems to pause, where the universe holds its breath, and where the divine enters our world in the most humble of ways. The Christmas Proclamation, which we heard at the beginning of this Mass, is a powerful reminder that the birth of Jesus Christ is not a fairy tale, but a pivotal moment in the tapestry of human and sacred history. This really happened at a set point in human history.

Imagine, if you will, the vast expanse of history stretching from the dawn of creation, through the covenant with Abraham, the Exodus from Egypt, and the anointing of David as king. All these events, like stars in the night sky, lead us to this night in Bethlehem, where the Virgin Mary gives birth to the Son of God. This is not a myth, but a reality that anchors our faith in the very fabric of time. In fact, we now mark time from this point onward. This is the year of our Lord, *Anno Domini*, A.D.

Earlier, at the Vigil Mass, we reflected on the genealogy of Jesus. This long list of names is not just a historical account; it is a testament to the faithfulness of God. It shows us that the Son of God did not appear out of nowhere. He comes from a family, a people, a story filled with both triumphs and trials. God's plan unfolds through generations, in the lives of real people, just like us.

Tonight's Gospel brings us to the immediate story of Mary and Joseph. Joseph, a man of humble means, journeys from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the city of David, because of a decree from Caesar Augustus. This journey is fraught with challenges, yet it is through these ordinary human circumstances that God's promise is fulfilled. The Messiah is born in Bethlehem, not by human design, but by the faithfulness of God.

And there, in the simplicity of a manger, the King of heaven is born. There is no room in the inn, no grand display of power. Instead, God enters our world through vulnerability, through the quiet, gentle presence of a newborn child. He comes close to those who live on the margins, to those who are most in need of His light.

The shepherds, tending their flocks by night, are the first to hear the angelic announcement: "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." This is the good news of Christmas. God has not remained distant. He has come near. He has entered our history, our weakness, our darkness, to redeem it from within.

This mystery does not remain locked in the past. The Christmas Proclamation places Christ's birth within history so that we might recognize that history itself now has a direction. And that is the mission of the Church—to be the reorienter of culture. We are not meant to be a mirror reflecting the world back to itself, nor an escape from the world. We exist to be a compass pointing the world in the right direction.

The Fathers of the Church understood this deeply. St. Augustine spoke of the Christian life as *conversio ad Dominum*, a turning toward the Lord. Conversion is not first about self-improvement; it is about re-orientation. It is about learning again which way is true north.

Our worship expresses this truth. When we turn together toward the Lord, we are not turning our backs on the world. We are turning the world back toward God, one person at a time. Like salt, the Church preserves what is good. Like leaven, she transforms quietly from within. Like light, she reveals the way forward. And like a compass, she keeps humanity oriented toward its eternal destiny.



Tonight, as we adore the Word made flesh, we are reminded that the world does not find its meaning by looking inward, but by turning toward Christ. The angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest.” The shepherds turned toward Bethlehem. So must we. When we gather in the middle of the night and turn our hearts toward God in adoration of the Incarnation, we become a beacon of light in the darkness, orienting the world rightly.

As we gather at this altar and turn toward the Lord who comes to meet us, may our living of this faith in all aspects of our lives help re-orient the world, until all creation joins us in glorifying God, now and forever. Amen.