

The Nativity Of The Lord (Christmas)

Saturday **Weekend Masses, December 24th - 25th 2022**

8:15 a.m. **B/D Blessings Janette Bass**
 4:00 p.m. **+ In Memory of Herbert Grigg, Sr. by wife and children**
 10:00 p.m. **+ In Memory of Margaret and Merrill Carson**
Sunday 7:15 a.m. (Spanish) **+ In Memory of Bienvenido and Victor Davis by sisters**
 9:00 a.m. **+ In Memory of Frank and Edris McNamara by children**
 11:00 a.m. **B/D Blessings Rizalina Batenga**

DAILY MASSES, December 26th - 30th

Mon. — 6:30 a.m. 35th Wedding Anniversary Paul and Cristina James

Tues. — 6:30 a.m. + In Memory of Felipe Ayala, Sr. by his sisters

Wed. — 6:30 a.m. + In Memory of Kerriann Rentas by Luz Ayala

Thurs. — 6:30 a.m. + In Memory of Merle Seepersad by Pugh family

Fri. — 6:30 a.m. + In Memory of Merle Seepersad by Paraliticci family

Next Weekend- December 31st - January 1st

Saturday 8:15 a.m. + In Memory of Socorro "Bong" Domingo by Batenga family

4:00 p.m. **+ In Memory of Guillermina Ayala by Luz Ayala**

10:00 p.m. **+ In Memory of Ines, Isabelle and Epifania Sanchez**

Sunday 7:15 a.m. For the people of the parish

9:00 a.m. **+ In Memory of Mildred DeChabert by Batenga family**

11:00 a.m. **+ In Memory of Claire Solomon-Copland by Annmarie & Rita**

Rectory Office Closed During The Holidays



Monday, Dec. 26th
 St. Stephen, The First Martyr

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
 Mt 10:17-22

Tuesday, Dec. 27th

St. Joseph, Apostle
 and Evangelist

1 Jn 1:1-4
 Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Wednesday, Dec. 28th
 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

1 Jn 1:5-2:2
 Mt 2:13-18

Thursday, Dec. 29th
 St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and
 Martyr

1 Jn 2:3-11
 Lk 2:22-35

Friday, Dec. 30th
 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary
 and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14
 Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Saturday, Dec. 31st

1 Jn 2:18-21
 Jn 1:1-18

Sunday, Jan. 1st
Solemnity of Mary The
Holy Mother of God
 Nm 6:22-27
 Gal 4:4-7
 Lk 2:16-21

MISSALETTES— Our December Missalette are donated in
 Memory of Lynell Chapman by her mother E. Chapman.

The Sanctuary Candle—is burning for B/D
 Blessings for Rizalina Batenga.



Second Collection: This Sunday second collection
 will be used for parish Insurance. Thanks for your generosity.



Christmas Mass Schedule

Dec. 24th— 4:00p.m. (Vigil Mass)

Dec. 24th—10:00p.m. (Mid-Night)

Dec. 25th— 7:15a.m. (Spanish)

9:00a.m. (English)

New Year's Mass Schedule

Dec. 31st—4:00 p.m. (Vigil) and 10:00 p.m. (Mid-Night)

Jan. 1st— 7:15 a.m. (Spanish) and 9:00 a.m. (English)

Aguinaldo Mass—December 16 to 24th at 6:30 a.m.

- **Thanks** to everyone that helped with the
 decorating of the Church for Christmas. Your help
 is always appreciated. God Bless each and every-
 one!
- **From December 26 until January 6 Mass will be
 held at 6:30 a.m. Only.** The 8:15 a.m. Mass can-
 celled with the exception of Wednesday, Dec. 28,
 2022 and January 4th.
- **ALL DAY ADORATION** cancelled on Thursday,
 December 29th and January 5th. We will resume
 on the 12th of January, 2023.

Solemnidad de la Natividad del Señor

Fin de Semana del 24 al 25 de Diciembre, 2022

Sábado
 8:15 a.m. Cumpleaños Janette Bass
 4:00 p.m. + En Memoria de Herbert Grigg, Sr. por esposa e hijos
 10:00 p.m. + En Memoria de Margaret y Merrill Carson
 Domingo 7:15 a.m. (Español) + En Memoria de Bienvenido y Victor Davis por sus hnas.
 9:00 a.m. + En Memoria de Frank y Edris McNamara por su hijos
 11:00 a.m. Cumpleaños Rizalina Batenga

Misas Diarias del 26 al 30 de Diciembre

Lu.— 6:30 a.m. 35 Aniversario de Bodas Paul y Cristina James
 Ma.— 6:30 a.m. + En Memoria de Felipe Ayala, Sr. por sus hermanas
 Mi.— 6:30 a.m. + En Memoria de Kerrian Rentas por Luz Ayala
 Ju. — 6:30 a.m. + En Memoria de Merle Seepersad por la familia Pugh
 Vi.— 6:30 a.m. + En Memoria de Merle Seepersad por la familia Paralittici

Próximo Domingo del 31 de Diciembre al 1 de Enero

Sábado 8:15 a.m. — Cumpleaños Janette Bass
 4:00 p.m. — + En Memoria de Herbert Grigg, Sr. por esposa e hijos
 10:00 p.m. — + En Memoria de Ines, Isabelle, y Epifania Sanchez
 Domingo 7:15 a.m. — Por los feligreses de la parroquia
 9:00 a.m. — + En Memoria de Mildred DeChabert por la familia Batenga
 11:00 a.m. — + En Memoria de Claire Solomon- Copland por Annmarie y Rita

Horario
RECTORIA
 Lunes—
 Viernes
 9 a 2 pm.

Cerrada durante
 los días festivos.

Grupo Hispano
 Limpieza de la Iglesia
 los segundos sábados
 de cada mes a las
 9:00a.m.
 Apreciamos tu
 ayuda.

Misas de la Comunidad

- En Súplica a Santa Lucía por una pronta mejora y recuperación.
- +Isabelle Bermudez, Inez Ayala y Epifania "Fañita " Sanchez.

GRACIAS! A todos los que ayudaron a decorar la Iglesia para Navidad. Estamos muy agradecidos. Dios los Bendiga!



 **Segunda Colecta:** Este Domingo la segunda colecta sera para el Seguro de la parroquia. Gracias!

La Vela Del Santuario *esta encendida por una bendición en el cumpleaños de Rizalina Batenga.*

Los Misales de Diciembre estan donados en Memoria de + Lynell Chapman de su mamá E. Chapman.

Los MISALES en Español del 2023 estan a la venta \$9.00 c/u. Favor de ver a Rosita para hacer su compra.

MISAS de Navidades

24 de Diciembre—4:00 p.m. (Vigilia)
 24 de Diciembre—10:00p.m. (Misa Media -Noche)
 25 de Diciembre — 7:15 a.m. (Español) 9:00 a.m. (Inglés)
Misas -Año Nuevo- 31 de Diciembre—4:00 y 10:00 p.m.
 1ro Enero— 7:15 a.m. (Español) y 9:00 a.m. (Inglés)
Misas de Aguinaldo —Diciembre 16 al 24th a las 6:30 a.m.

- **Desde el 26 de diciembre hasta el 6 de enero, la misa se llevará a cabo a las 6:30 a.m. solamente.** La Misa de las 8:15 a.m. cancelada con la excepción del miércoles 28 de diciembre y el 4 de enero.

LA ADORACIÓN DE TODO EL DÍA será cancelada el jueves 29 de diciembre y el 5 de enero. Regresamos el 12 de enero de 2023.

Solemnidad de la Natividad del Señor

Feliz Navidad queridos hermanos! El día del nacimiento de Jesús, para el que tanto nos hemos estado preparando durante todo el tiempo de Adviento, se ha llegado. Bienvenidos a la celebración de esta misa, en la Solemnidad de la Natividad del Señor.

El Verbo se hizo hombre y habitó entre nosotros. Lo que para el Antiguo testamento era una profecía, una victoria anunciada por la primera lectura, en el Nuevo testamento se vuelve una realidad, porque Dios nos ha hablado por medio de su Hijo, como lo dice San Pablo, el Verbo que se hizo Carne y habitó entre nosotros, como lo atestigua el Evangelio de San Juan. (Isaías 52, 7-10)

Salmo 97, 1. 2-3ab. 3cd-4. 5-6 Con el salmo 97, Israel se extasiaba y cantaba ante la victoria del retorno a Jerusalén; nosotros cantamos la victoria de nuestro Dios manifestada en el nacimiento de Cristo.

A los cristianos hebreos, que sentían nostalgia de la tradición religiosa, el autor de esta carta les asegura la supremacía de la vida cristiana, subrayando la superioridad de Cristo sobre cualquier otro intermediario divino. Su venida al mundo y su actuación en la historia son, significativamente, la base de esta superioridad sobre profetas y ángeles, y su encarnación es el culmen de la desvelación divina. (Hebreos 1, 1-6)

Escucharemos a continuación una síntesis del todo el Evangelio de San Juan, en un texto que es, a la vez, una profunda interpretación del proyecto de Dios realizado en la encarnación del Verbo, pre-existente en el seno de Dios. (Juan 1, 1-18)



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St. Stephen, The First Martyr

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
Mt 10:17-22

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Jn 20:1a, 2-8

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The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14
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Saturday, Dec. 31st

1 Jn 2:18-21
Jn 1:1-18

Sunday, Jan. 1st
Solemnity of Mary The Holy Mother of God
Nm 6:22-27

Oración

San Miguel Arcángel,
defiéndenos en la batalla.

Sé nuestro amparo
contra la perversidad y asechanzas del
demonio.

Reprímale Dios, pedimos suplicantes,
y tú Príncipe de la Milicia Celestial,
arroja al infierno con el divino poder
a Satanás y a los otros espíritus malignos
que andan dispersos por el mundo
para la perdición de las almas.
Amén."

Oración del Año Santo de la Eucaristía

Jesús, creo que estás presente, Cuerpo, Sangre, Alma y Divinidad en la Eucaristía. En Ti pongo a toda mi familia. Sana nuestras heridas y renuévanos en corazón y mente con una mayor reverencia, devoción y amor por ti en la Sagrada Eucaristía.

Nuestra Señora, primer tabernáculo del Verbo hecho carne, intercede por nosotros por tu Hijo, especialmente por la Diócesis de San Tomás en las Islas Vírgenes y nuestros sacerdotes. Que a través de su amor por el sacerdocio y la Eucaristía, inspiren a los hombres al sacerdocio para que la Misa continúe siendo ofrecida para que podamos ser alimentados con el Cuerpo y la Sangre de tu Hijo. Guía especialmente a nuestros jóvenes a tu Iglesia para que puedan prosperar al conocer la verdad que solo viene de Jesús.

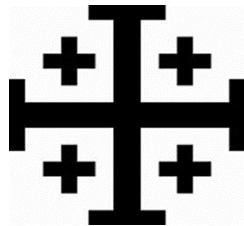
Santísima Trinidad, ¡te adoro! Dios mío, te amo en el Santísimo Sacramento. Amén.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

2182 Queen Street, Christiansted, V.I. 00820

Telephone: (340) 773-7564

WEB: hccstx.org / Email: holycrossstx@gmail.com



RECTORY HOURS: MONDAY- FRIDAY, 9:00 a.m. –2 :00 p.m.
(SUMMER HOURS: Monday-Friday) 9:00–12:00 noon)

MORNING DAILY MASS SCHEDULE: Monday - Friday 6:30 and 8:15 a.m.

Saturday Vigil- 4:00 P.M.

Sunday—7:15 a.m. (Spanish), 9:00 and 11:00a.m. (English)

Sacred Heart Chapel (LBJ) 9:00 a.m. (English) -Closed until further notice



**Confessions: Saturday, 3:30 p.m. ,
Sunday before Mass. Always upon request.**

Baptisms: Last Sunday of the month after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. Parents must take classes. Please visit the Rectory Office between 9-3 p.m. to fill out the necessary forms. **GODPARENTS/SPONSORS REQUIREMENTS*** At least 16 years old *Have themselves received the sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Communion and Confirmation* Must be a practicing Catholic who attends Mass every Sunday or (Saturday night) * If married, they must have been married by priest * If single, he/she does not live with someone outside of marriage.

Communion to the Sick: Please call the Rectory

The Sacrament of the Sick:

Please call the Rectory any time— especially in an emergency

FUNERALS: No Funerals on weekends or Thursdays. Please contact Rectory. No date is to be set without consulting the Church office.

Marriage: Please see parish priest

Religious Education-CCD Classes: 9:00—10:30a.m. every Saturday,
(September to May)

Communion to Sick by Priest: First Friday of the month

Knights of Columbus: 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, 6 p.m.

Pastor – Rev. E. Patrick Lynch, C.Ss.R
Parochial Vicar- Rev. Yacob Fopa Lonfo
In Residence- Rev. Eduardo Ortiz

Deacons: Rev. Mr. David Capriola,
Rev. Mr. Vincent Colianni, Rev. Mr. Reynold
Modeste, and Rev. Mr. Benjamin Parrilla

Missionaries of Charity: (340)-473-7055
Sr. Arvind, M.C., Sr. Lourdes, M.C. ,
Sr. Jeevitha, M.C., Sr. Maria Albertha, M.C.

Parish Secretary: Ms. Serena Anduze

Business Manager: Ms. Penrose Gardiner

Office Assistant: Ms. Devian Leonce

St. Mary's School Office: Tel: 340-773-0117 or
340-643-5915 Principal: Ms. Edna M. Thomas

PLEASE PRAY– for our sick and shut-ins:

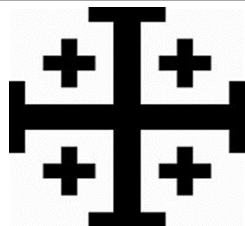
Felix Garcia, Jr., Edith & Cleofe Ascencio, Pascualina
Jacobs, Hector Maldonado Santos, Kamara Salamah,
Richard Marsico, AnnMarie Gidharry, Graciano
"Rocky" Belardo , Cenita Belardo-Rogers, Marcela
Santos, Alice Maynard, Maria Monell, Roy Beckles,
Celestine Royer, Ursula Richards, Regina G. Gerrty,
Antonio Martin, Alicia Hewitt, Marceline Steele,
Alice Richardson, Dominga Navarro, Jacinth
Charles, Sylvia Brady, Veronica Codrington,
Theresa Kelly, Joseph & Rachel Graham, Floretta
Robinson, Christine Andersen-Raines, Sylvia
George, Hilarena James, Cindy Creighton, Edith
Hovak, Bernadette Palton, Sonia Smith, Artemia
Viera, Steven & Allen Willey, Norma Dyer, Myrna
Bonano, Maria Hernandez, Maria E. Mendez,
Mary Walcott, Stanley Berkley, Felicidad
Guadalupe, Emmeth James, Fadia Chipman, Louis
Talbot, Linda Callwood, Roy Violet, Sr., Veronica
Rawlins, Alicia Diaz, Crescencia Castro, Patricia &
James Kelley, Christina Long, Kevin Valentine,
Tarika Bynoe, Jeff Denner, Joseph Michael,
Lenore Gonzalez, Amelia Guardiola, John Christian,
Nalda Henry de Lugo, Lew & Diana James, Unita
Alexander, Joseph Moses, and Curtis McArthur.

◆ Please notify the Rectory Office (773-7564)
in the event of recovery or death of shut-in.
*Remember in prayer all those in the Armed
Forces and all those affected by natural
disasters.*

◆ **ADORATION** of the Blessed Sacrament—
On Thursdays here at Holy Cross after the
8:15 a.m. Mass, Holy Hour until 5:00 p.m.

Iglesia Católica

Holy CROSS



2182 Queen Street, Christiansted, V.I. 00820

WEB: hccstx.org / Email: holycrossstx@gmail.com

Telefono: (340) 773-7564

HORARIO Rectoria: LUNES- VIERNES, 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.

Horario del Verano: Lunes-Viernes 9:00-12:00 p.m.

MISAS DIARIAS DE LA MAÑANA - Lunes - Viernes 6:30 -8:15 a.m.

Sábados-Vigilia -4:00 p.m.

DOMINGOS—7:15 a.m., Español, 9:00 y 11 a.m., Inglés
Capilla Sagrado Corazón (LB) 9:00 a.m., Inglés- Cerrada hasta nuevo Aviso



Confesiones: Sábado, 3:30 p.m. , Domingos antes de Misa y siempre a petición.

Bautismos: El ultimo domingo del mes despues del la Misa de las 11:00 am. Tres clases para el bautismo son requeridas para los papas. Favor de llamar la Rectoria de 9:00 a 3:00 p.m. durante la semana para llenar los papeles necesarios. **REQUISITOS** para los padrinos* Deben tener 16 años de edad *Deben tener los Sacramentos del Bautismo, Reconciliación, Comunión y Confirmación* Deben de ser Católicos practicantes—el cual asiste a Misa todos los domingos o los sábados (vigilia)
 * Si eres casado, deben haber sido casado por un sacerdote * Si eres soltero, usted no de debe de estar viviendo con alguien fuera del matrimonio.

Comunión a Los Enfermos: Primer Viernes del mes

El Sacramento a los Enfermos:

Favor de llamar la Rectory a cualquier hora— especialmente en caso de emergencia

FUNERALES: No habran Funerales los fines de semana ni los Jueves debido a la Adoracion y Benedición al Sagrado Sacramento. No separen fecha sin haber consultado con la oficina de la Rectoria. **Bodas:** Favor de verse con el sacerdote

Educación Religiosa-Clases CCD: 9:00—10:30a.m. Todos los Sábados durante el año escolar, (Septiembre - Mayo)

Caballeros de Colón: 1er y 3er Jueves del mes, 6:00 p.m.

Pastor –Rev. E. Patrick Lynch, C.Ss.R
Vicario Paroquial– Pr. Yacob Fopa Lonfo
En Residencia– Pr. Eduardo Ortiz

Diaconos: Rev. Sr. David Capriola, Rev. Sr. Vincent Colianni, Rev. , Rev. Sr. Reynold Modeste, y Rev. Sr. Benjamin Parrilla

Misioneras de la Caridad: (473-7055)

Hna. Arvind, M.C. , Hna. Lourdes,

Hna. Jeevitha, M.C. , Hna. Maria Alberta, M.C.

Secretaria: Ms. Serena Anduze

Gerente de Negocios: Ms. Penrose Gardiner

Asistente de Oficina: Ms. Devian Leonce

Escuela St. Mary's : Tel: 340-773-0117 o al 340-643-5915 Principal: Edna M. Thomas

*** Favor de Orar por los Enfermos–**

Felix Garcia, Jr., AnnMarie Gidharry, Edith & Cleofe Ascencio, Pascualina Jacobs, Hector Maldonado Santos, Graciano “Rocky” Belardo, Richard Marsico, Cenita Belardo-Rogers, Marcela Santos, Alice Maynard, Maria Monell, Roy Beckles, Celestine Royer, Ursula Richards, Regina G. Gerrty, Antonio Martin, Alicia Hewitt, Marceline Steele, Alice Richardson, Dominga Navarro, Jacinth Charles, Sylvia Brady, Veronica Codrington, Theresa Kelly, Joseph and Rachel Graham, Christine Andersen Raines, Sylvia George, Hilarena James, Cindy Creighton, Edith Hovak, Bernadette Palton, Sonia Smith, Artemia Viera, Steven y Allen Willey, Norma Dyer, Myrna Bonano, Maria Hernandez, Leoncita Halley, Maria E. Mendez, Mary Walcott, Stanley Berkley, Felicidad Guadalupe, Emmeth James, Fadia Chipman, Louis Talbot, Linda Callwood, Roy Violet, Sr., Veronica Rawlins, Alicia Diaz, Crescencia Castro, Patricia y James Kelley, Christina Long, Kevin Valentine, Tarika Bynoe, Jeff Denner, Joseph Michael, Lenore Gonzalez, Amelia Guardiola, John Christian, Nalda Henry de Lugo, Lew y Diana James, Unita Alexander, Joseph Moses, y Curtis McArthur.

*Favor de notificar la Rectoria (773-7564) si hay mejoras o muerte.

*Recordemos en oración aquellos en Las Fuerzas Armadas y aquellos afectados por los desastres naturales.

ADORACION del Sagrado Sacramento—Los Jueves aqui en Holy Cross despues de la Misa.

St. Mary's School

340-773-0117 or 340-643-5915

officeatstmary@gmail.com

School Office 8:00– 2:00 p.m.
Christmas Break Dec. 21—January 5th

Plans for St. Mary School annual fundraising banquet and auction are underway. We are requesting assistance for this major fundraiser from everyone in the St. Mary Catholic School family. Your assistance can be in the form of monetary donations, items of value to be auctioned (paintings, jewelry etc.) an ad in the auction booklet or donation of your time to assist with the many tasks necessary to host a successful auction. Please find it in your heart and in your schedule to assist.

**Please keep our Catholic Schools
in your Prayers**

Holy Year of the Eucharist Prayer

Jesus, I believe that you are present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Eucharist. In You I place my whole family. Heal our wounds and renew us in heart and mind with a greater reverence, devotion, and love for you in the Holy Eucharist.

Our Lady, first tabernacle of the Word made flesh, intercede on our behalf to your Son, especially for the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands and our priests. Through their love for the priesthood and the Eucharist, may they inspire men to the priesthood, that the Mass may continue to be offered so that we may be nourished with your Son's Body and Blood. Guide especially our youth to your Church so they may thrive by knowing the truth that only comes from Jesus.

Most Holy Trinity, I adore you! My God, I love you in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Amen.

Holy Cross Church—November 2022 Financial Summary **Income**

Parish Contribution	\$ 11,021.48
Donations /Other Revenue	\$ 7,920.86
Second Collections	\$ 3,414.24
TOTAL	\$ 22,356.58

Expenses

Administrative	\$ 11,710.62	Benefits	\$3,976.29
\$ Taxes	\$ 383.37		
Supplies/Office	\$ 3,668.01		
Maintenance	\$ 1,985.49	Insurance	\$2,355.33
Utilities	\$ 2,686.52		
Total	\$ 26,765.63		
Net Income (Loss)	(\$ 4,409.05)		

THAT MAN IS YOU: Meeting every Saturday morning at 7AM. All men are welcome. Hot breakfast and coffee served. If you have any questions, contact Jeff Jones at jeffbmttx@gmail.com



We remember the many brave men and women who have given their lives through the history of our country to protect us from danger and harm. We remember all those who sustained injury in mind and/or body in the course of their service. We salute all those who served in the military.



Practice

Every 2nd and last Friday of each month.

Wearing of the mask in Church is optional. Also giving receiving Holy Communion on the tongue is allowed. Please wait until the end of Communion line to receive on the tongue. The priest may choose to purify his fingers with a purificator.

El uso de la máscara en la Iglesia es opcional. También se permite dar la Sagrada Comunión en la lengua. Por favor, espere hasta el final de la línea de comunión para recibir en la lengua. El sacerdote puede optar por purificar sus dedos con un purificador.

Child Sexual Abuse Awareness

The Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands is committed to protecting children from all harm. If you have knowledge of any member of the clergy or other church worker who may have abused a minor, please contact the Child Protection Program Coordinator at 340-774-3166x107 to report an abuse to local authorities, contact Dept. of Human Services (340)773-2323.

FLOCK NOTE: Please sign up for our parish email/text notification list. Let's keep in touch! Get important updates via email and text. Here is how to sign up **TEXT hccstx to 84576**

JAMES ADAMS ELECTRICAL, LLC

V.I. Electrical Contractor/Solar Installation
jadams3elec@gmail.com

Victoria's Kitchen feeds the less fortunate here at Holy Cross on Thursdays. Your donations helps support this worthy cause. You can place your check in the collection basket payable to Holy Cross Church, **Attention "VICTORIA'S Kitchen"**. God Bless!

CHRISTMAS. London, 1945

by Caryll Houselander

I once overheard a remark which started me thinking about Christmas in a new way. Until then I had seen it through the medium of the Christmas Card, Christmas roses and snow and a plentiful sprinkle of glitter-frost that we could buy then at 4s a packet. The remark which made me begin to think was "There must have been mice and spiders in the stable at Bethlehem." Yes, Christ was born not into a fanciful world, but into our real world that includes mice and spiders.

Read the gospels for Christmas and you will see the likeness between Christ's day and ours. It is shocking. You recognize Herod, the murder of the innocents, the flight into Egypt, the homeless refugees in a strange land, the young mother trudging from door to door, seeking somewhere to give birth to her baby, and posted on every door in Bethlehem the notice, so familiar to us, "No rooms to let".

The likeness is also in the minds of men. Christ came into a world sickened with persecution, obsessed with fear. Those who waited for Him expected an earthly kingdom, they wanted power to match with power.

It is as hard for most people today to believe in the littleness, the humility of Christ, as it would have been for the Jews in His own day to believe that the shivering baby, born like a poor little bleating lamb out in the dark and the cold, could set them free.

Obsessed by the struggle for temporal existence we forget that man is both soul and body, that peace is not something that this world can give. We forget that such things as wonder and poetry and prayer are as much our needs as food and drink and sleep. We profess Christianity but are almost shocked by it in practice, so complacently have we accepted materialism, security, good health.

We want Christ on our terms, Christ gives Himself only on His own. He is purity, humility, simplicity, love. In Him is the wholeness of man, soul and body, the kingdom of heaven in the heart, the peace that the world cannot give. **By Him the simplest materials of life become the things of eternal love.** He does not despise them, He takes them into His hands: in His hands, bread is changed to God.

Our souls are like the inn, crowded, noisy, restless. We herd together to try to forget we are afraid, we shout our hearts down. We shrink from the silence that must fall upon our souls if they are to cradle the child of burning snow.

Christmas means one thing and one thing only, that it is the divine will of love to be born in our hearts. Christmas 1945 is the birth of Christ in us. He is the Word of God, telling the forgotten secret of infinite love once more. He wants to tell it in our voices and in our words.

I used to think how vexed the innkeeper would have been had he found out who it was that he had turned from his door, but I have learnt to think that thankfulness would have overcome vexation, because after all he had the quiet, dark stable just outside and he had lent that to the peasant girl in whom God was hidden.

Anyway it was Christ Himself who chose the stable to be born in. He still chooses unlikely places. In each of us, just beyond the noise of our outward life, there is some place of silence and darkness, an emptiness where, if we have courage enough, we are alone with ourselves. There, in this place of silence, we know that God alone can fill our emptiness, He alone can content us, He

It is in this secret place of the soul that Christ wants to be born in us. He wants to be born in us, that through us He may live in this world again and make it new with His new life, make it young with his youngness, little with His littleness, true with His truth, childlike with His childhood, pure with His purity.

It is in the dark place of our heart that Christ wants the light of the world to begin to burn and from its burning to radiate, until it shines back from the face of humanity. Here it is that He wants the light to begin to shine in darkness and the life of the world to begin again.

In Him there was life and the life was the light of men, and the light shines in darkness that was not able to master it. **It is easy to say that the world is wounded, hard to see that its healing begins in our own heart.**

Vital Christianity means a living Christhood, a living Christ in man's heart, and Christ can live in our hearts only if He is born in them individually. He can be born in us only if we accept Him in His own way, in littleness, humility, secret, hidden and small, to be fostered and loved in us, cradled and clothed in us.....

It requires faith to believe that Christ will be born in man this Christmas, but much more faith to believe that He will be born in our own heart, that He could fulfill His will of love in our own life, our life with so little radius for His light, so little journeying for His feet, so small a distance for His hands to reach, and such constriction round His heart.

Christ chose the stable, the narrowness, the secrecy, as if He had bound up his own omnipotence in swaddling hands. People passing the door could never have guessed that anything was happening inside, that God was being born in there! And who knew? About six men out of whole world, two or three shepherds who heard the singing of angels, three mysterious scholars, who followed the stars. They all come silently out of the darkness, kneel for a moment and are gone again. We see them no more, nor hear their voices. They knew that they had seen the Lord, but seem not to have told anyone else. A Child smiled on them in the night, that is all we know of them. And soon the Child Himself fled away from Bethlehem and disappeared from our sight.

Now He comes to be born in the narrowness of our lives, to give His love to the world through us, through our flesh and blood. That is one meaning of the Incarnation.

The reason why we are where we are this Christmas, in this house, family, office, workroom, hospital or camp, is because it is here in this place that Christ wants to be born, from here that He wants His life to begin again in the world.

The reason why we are with these particular people is because it is precisely to these people that Christ wants us to give His love. This year we are His trustees for these people, He has put His love for them into our hands, into our hearts. We did not choose this place— Christ has chosen it. We did not choose these people— Christ has chosen them.

We are asked one thing, to have the humility and courage to open the secret place of our heart to Christ, conscious though we are that it is as derelict as the stable, and that His light will reveal the mouse and the spider.

It may have been puzzling, even to Mary, how Christ was giving His life to the whole world in the obscurity of Bethlehem, but enough for her that this was His way. It still is, and He Himself is the way, the only way to our peace.

Because the Word of God was humble as the bleating of a lamb, lost along the darkness, today the voices of men and angels are a great choir singing in the light, "Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, give us peace".