

Sunday, December 16, 2018

JOY in children's Presentation

Choir Suite- The Birth of a King

Feeling the Joy

Where are you looking for joy this Advent/Christmas? For those who believe, the joy we are searching for is already in our hearts if we believe in the Promised One who comes to us as a baby. God loved us and continues to love us so much that He sent Jesus to live a human life on earth. Through Jesus our life is changed. And there is joy if we believe in the baby of the manger, the Christ of the cross and the Saviour of the resurrection.

Sometimes we might be happy, but what we should all be striving for is to have the joy of the Lord within us because this joy will give us our strength when maybe we are not so happy. In those moments when we remember Christmas celebrations of years gone by and we remember our loved ones who are now with God,. In those moments we may not be too happy but the joy of Jesus is still there.

Where do you find joy? In the old English Christmas carol which dates back to 1760 the composer wanted the listener to understand the purpose of Jesus' coming to earth was to give us comfort and joy. Comfort when we are experiencing difficult times and joy as we continue to live and love others. Comfort so that we would be forgiven of all sin and joy in knowing that we belong to Christ and are the children of God.

God rest ye merry gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Savior Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r When we were gone astray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy Comfort and joy Oh tidings of comfort and joy

Mary probably was not too joyful when she arrived at Bethlehem without a place to stay. She definitely was not comfortable as she was experiencing labour pains. She needed a place to rest, lay down and if it was the right time, a place to deliver her baby. She took a terrible situation for what it was and made the best of it because she knew that the baby who was born would bring joy to others as he was God's son and the promised messiah. The joy she had was in being his mother and tending to his needs, but once he grew up, God would guide his life and lead others to experience life to its fullest. A life of joy and wonder, comfort and peace.

As we draw closer to celebrating Jesus' birth what are your feelings- are you in need of forgiveness or are you content. Are you unhappy because of current circumstances—maybe you are grieving the death of a loved in the last few days/ weeks or months—what impact will this have on your celebration. Will you search for joy in the midst of sadness because this is

what is necessary- for Christ came into the world to save us. not to make us unhappy but bring hope and joy and peace. Are we willing to trust Jesus and receive the joy only he can bring? When we spell joy we need to remember that it is JESUS OTHERS and YOU. This is the way of knowing Christ and answering his call to serve others.

Only you can decide to be happy or not; but to be filled with joy and this can occur now—by receiving the joy of the Lord as we anticipate Jesus' birth or to wait until the day comes when you are called home by God and you wonder if you have done your best for Him. To experience the joy that Christmas brings means welcoming Christ into your life and letting him guide you each day.

You will not always be happy but if you have the joy of Jesus within, you can always renew your outlook, your faith and hope because you know Jesus.

Let us rejoice in this and Pray

HOLY God thank you for the joy we find in you even when we are saddened by death of loved ones, losses of various kinds and even when we seem to lose our way. You are there for us no matter what and as we reach down within our hearts you reveal to us again the joy that you have given to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

We thank you God for Jesus and as we continue to await his birth into our lives once again, we ask for strength, guidance and hope. We ask this in the name of Jesus our joy. Amen.