

## Christmas 2018 message by Fr. Gabor

What does it mean that God's Son came among us as a little human being?

First of all it tells me that the Son of the Almighty Father did not refrain from making himself little; little as a cell in Mary's womb and become a baby and be as vulnerable as a new-born baby who needed the love and care of human beings, in particular his parents. This attitude of being little and humble before God remains a central part of Jesus' life, teaching and example, and encourages his disciples of all ages, including us, to be humble and not to Lord over others.

This way the Lord Jesus also confirmed the importance of loving and caring parents. Christmas holidays are a good time to slow down, to get out of the habit of daily business and running around, and just spend quality time together with each other, play and talk, listen and eat together. Thus Christmas is also a good opportunity to start anew, to rediscover the joy of having a family, regardless of how imperfect our families are. Today in the world there are many families that will not celebrate Christmas, because of falling out with each other or war conflicts. Let us not allow our internal conflicts to get out of hand so much that they destroy our families, the most fundamental and important building blocks of our societies.

The baby in the manger also tells me that the Son of the almighty Father values human nature right from the moment of conception in the womb. Human nature is precious to him so much that he takes on our human nature including our physical nature. As a human being God wants to relate to us and communicate with us in the way we human beings do, not so much through miraculous revelations, but through ordinary human ways, through each other, through heart to heart relationships, and that is what we are aiming to build up as a church family. Remember the first commandment: love the Lord your God with all your mind and with all your heart (Deuteronomy 6:4-7, Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31). I can't imagine the baby Jesus just looking at his mother Mary with serious eyes, meditating on her Immaculate Conception or some other theological issues. It was more likely that the baby Jesus was craving for Mary's cuddle and was looking for how he could catch Mary's attention, just as babies do. His heart must have been full of love for Mary and so was Mary and Joseph's heart.

The birth of the baby Jesus is also about the birth of true light in the darkness: God comes to us in our darkness. Jesus comes into our sense of loss, into our grief, and into our chaotic life and tells us, I am with you, I am Immanuel. God is with us in our darkness and difficult times. He tells us that instead of focusing on the darkness in difficult times, let's get up, get on your feet, turn your eyes towards the true light, which may come to you in the form of a vulnerable human being, like a baby or an adults in need, and show that you care, and knowing what a big difference you will make to such a vulnerable person who may be less fortunate than you are you will find true joy; just as Mary and Joseph on that dark night were not overtaken by the disappointment that nobody gave them accommodation; they humbly accepted what was left, a manger, and gave birth to Jesus and filled with love they cared for him; that was their joy and not some kind of gift or a comfortable accommodation.

In this day and age where Santa and gifts dominate our Christmas celebration the baby Jesus reminds us that true joy can still be found without all the commodities of modern life; and it is hidden in giving and not in demanding.