

Eucharistic Homily

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 23, 2018

Christmas is a time of feasting, and rightly so. If anyone ever complains about the excessive eating of the Christmas season, you can remind them it was God's idea. When Jesus came into the world, He came to feast. In fact, as Luke 2 shows us, Jesus came to provide the greatest feast the world's ever had.

We all know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but it's important to remember that Bethlehem is Hebrew for "house of bread". And it's no accident that Jesus was laid in a manger, which, of course, is a feeding trough. So what? In John 6, Jesus spells it all out for us: "I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Jesus is the bread of life. He is manna from heaven. He is the source of life, not merely mortal life but eternal life. Eternal life is more than life that never ends. The difference is qualitative, not simply quantitative. Eternal life is new creation life. It's heavenly life. The eternal life that Jesus promises us is His own life—life freed from the curse of sin, life that has overcome death, life beyond the grave.

If you've been baptized into Christ and are seeking to live faithfully and obediently for Him, you are invited to partake of this feast that our gracious God has prepared for us. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

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