

Merry First & Only Christmas to You!

A few years ago I began seeing that each Christmas is our first and only Christmas. For me, this will be my first and only celebration of the birth of the Lord as a 61 year old. For you it may be your first and only Christmas at age 4, 17, 29, 34, 42, 56, 67, 78, 89, 94.

As we celebrate Christmas 2009, what set of experiences, what capacity for reception, does each of us bring to the manger and to the altar?

What Fits Into What?

Four weeks ago we marked the end of the Church Year 2009 with the celebration of Christ the King. It struck me for the first time that we are saying that Christ is the context into which everything — every event and every person — is to be fit. As Pope John Paul wrote, only in Christ do we find the “adequate dimension” for life.

This new insight led me to ask myself and you, “Do I fit Mass into my life, or my life into Mass?”

In reading *The Catholic Standard & Times* last week, I noticed these words (which I do not think I would have noticed a year ago), and something inside me leapt as I read: “Prayer is not the interlude between work...., or eating, or sleeping or recreation. Those are the interludes between prayer.”

Mystery

Today we celebrate the mystery that the One into Whom all creation fits, fits Himself into Mary’s son, so that He might (in the words of the carol *Away in a Manger*) “fit us for heaven to dwell with Him there.”

Merry Christmas 2009!