

STUFFED?

Stuffed-ness is a common though not necessarily universal experience on Christmas Day and/or over the days ahead. We can be stuffed on food. We can be stuffed with “stuff”. We can be stuffed with family, friends, and activity. We can even be stuffed and over-sated with boredom and isolation.

While on the one hand, the experience of being stuffed can snuff our experience of Christmas; on the other hand, the experience of being stuffed can actually whet our appetite for the truer and deeper celebration of Christ-Mass.

So, if you find yourself somewhat stuffed these days, the pastor invites you to join him in interpreting this experience as “the Silent Word pleading” (from the carol *What Child Is This?*). Frame this feeling as Christ the Word incarnate in our experience, informing us that what we thought would fill us has left us empty. Even when my stomach, or mind, or social calendar is full, there can be space in my soul for something or some One more. Naming such experience as hunger can lead us to Bethlehem, which in Hebrew means “the house or place of Bread”. Christ presents himself as the Bread of Life, as the One who alone can fill what remains empty when we have been stuffed. The Place of Bread where our hunger is drawing us.

And then we might revisit with profit the rich readings of the four Christ-Masses:

- 1) The Vigil Mass
Isaiah 62:1-5
Acts 13:16-17, 27, 29
Matthew 1:1-25

- 2) The Mass at Midnight
Isaiah 9:1-6
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14

- 3) The Mass at Dawn
Isaiah 62:11-12
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:15-20

- 4) The Mass During the Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Hebrews 1:1-6
John 1:1-18