

## Nadal

25 12 17

Almighty God,  
you have given us your only-begotten Son  
to take our nature upon him  
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:  
grant that we, who have been born again  
and made your children by adoption and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit.

Our text this morning is taken from the end of today's gospel: John 1, verse 14:

**'And the Word became flesh and lived among us'.**

Happy Christmas – Joyeux Noël. 'Happy' because today is Christmas – Christ's mass – the service of Holy Communion in church, when we celebrate the actual birthday of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. 'Joyeux' because we are truly full of joy at the thought that Christ is born today. 'Noel', in English 'Nowell' – pronounced the same but spelt differently – from the word 'nadal' in Provençal and, ultimately, from the Latin 'natalem' – natal.

So why should we, as Christians, be happy ? Never mind the presents, the food the drink, the company – all the good things we associate with the joy of celebrating a great Christmas. What should make us truly happy is simply summed up in one theological word – 'Incarnation'. The Incarnation of Jesus, the

word made flesh, God born as the boy, Jesus, Emmanuel – God with us, is the extraordinary truth that is at the exciting heart of our faith. As our text today succinctly says, ‘the Word became flesh and lived among us.’

God is, by definition, omniscient so he knows everything but for an omniscient God to become one of us, one like us, is for him to know first-hand what it is like to be in the flesh like us, enfleshed, and that is a remarkable demonstration of his love for us in the sense that in the person of his Son, Jesus, he was living alongside us, knowing and experiencing for himself exactly what it is like to be spirit embodied.

And, in the flesh, Jesus, the Son of God, suffered and died for us and his blood was shed for us on the cross. In the message of Christmas is the promise of Easter and each week, every Sunday here, we eat the bread and we drink the wine in order to remember that Jesus body was broken on the cross for us and his blood was shed on the cross for us and that through his flesh and blood, God is in truth with us still, and that all of us have the prospect of life immortal through our belief in him and through his love of us.

So can we be happy today ? I say we can because ‘the Word became flesh and lived among us’ – Happy Christmas.

I have spoken in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
Amen.

*Preached at the Eucharist  
St Bartholomew's, Dinard  
25<sup>th</sup> December 2017*

G: Sermons 37 :Nadal

