



Daily Reflections

December 28, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 2:13-18

When the magi had departed, behold,
the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said,
"Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt,
and stay there until I tell you.

Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him."

Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night
and departed for Egypt.

He stayed there until the death of Herod,
that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled,
Out of Egypt I called my son.

When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi,
he became furious.

He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity
two years old and under,
in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi.

Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet:
A voice was heard in Ramah,
sobbing and loud lamentation;
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she would not be consoled,
since they were no more.

Our Scripture Reflection

Joseph is warned by an angel in a dream to flee into Egypt with Mary and Jesus because the very paranoid King Herod wants to kill the child. Joseph acts with immediacy. Tragically, many babies are slaughtered because of the sin of one very sick man. Baby Jesus is spared. His time has not yet come. How tragic it is that in our own time around 4,000 babies are killed each day due to skewed thinking and the sin of abortion.

Food for your Journey

I like the idea of "keeping Christ in Christmas," but I don't think that it is Santa and ribbons and bows that threaten Christians today. I think that this was the case 20 years ago when the phrase first became popular. Pastors would say, "Remember, parishioners, it's not about all this extra stuff, it is about the birth of Christ." I will admit, 20 years ago, I said that!

That is not the way I see the phrase being promoted now. Now the phrase, "Keep Christ in Christmas" is not about speaking ill of Santa. It is about secularism and an unwillingness by secular society to mention not just Christmas, but Santa as well. Nothing about the holiday can be mentioned.

I believe the phrase that would currently be more apropos would not be "Keep Christ in Christmas," but "Keep Christmas!"

--Rev. Philip M. Enderle, Saint Matthew Church, Warrens, Wisconsin.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You gave Your life so that we might live with You forever. Open my eyes to the immense value of human life. May this motivate me to respect and protect life at every stage. Amen.