

ST. JOHN'S AT DIOCESAN CENTER IGLESIA EPISCOPAL DE SAN JUAN

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ON OUR LEVEL

The Rev. Andrew F. Kline

Text of a Sermon preached on the 1st Sunday after Christmas

December 27, 2020

ISAIAH 61:10-62:3 | 147:13-21

GALATIANS 3:23-25; 4:4-7 | JOHN 1:1-18

The angel of the Lord announced unto Mary.... And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (Angelus)

The time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. *Luke 2:8*

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

These words of life, these revelations, are the beginning, the middle and the end of the Christmas Story. Merry Christmas.

In the beginning was the Word. This is a translation of the Greek word “Logos”. This word is a big word. A summary word. It implies and bears all the mystery of language itself. Of a world being discovered by a child. Or a world being discovered by a deaf person and blind person. Or a world being discovered by an artist, or a musician, or a poet, or a scientist.

Its first translation is “reason”. After that such words as “wisdom”, “blueprint”, “generative code” all tease out its meaning. The Logos is the things that connects everything to everything else, and explains it as it unfolds, the generative principle itself. The Logos is what is revealed as the play comes to its climax, as the last chord of the symphony fades into memory, as the sun sets and rises on another day.

Or think of it this way. Without the Logos, scientific inquiry would be impossible. Because of the logos, we discover our world with the hope, with the trust, that it will and does make sense.

Just one example. We will be hearing so much in the days ahead about this vaccine is coming to put our lives back to “normal.” It is often referred to from the process by which it was created, the RNA messenger vaccine. This vaccine, created in record time, is the perfect example of the discovery of the divine logos, the code upholding the structure of all things. In just a few short months, we repurposed one variant of that code to disarm a harmful variant. And a light is shining in the darkness.

Spiritually speaking, Jesus Christ is that encoded word for us, the ineffable God encoded into human flesh. And so the Scriptures ask us to contemplate that, should we discover the secret of our DNA, and add the breath of God, the Holy Spirit, we have the formula for what makes us truly human, connected to God, and to the whole of creation around us.

The Christmas Story is that Jesus Christ is that Word spoken in eternity, that human life so fully transformed by Wisdom of God, that joins us forever to the life that created all things. Jesus Christ is

that Word spoken into the darkness that brings the eternal light into our lives, our souls, our spirit, our flesh.

It is a great mystery. Through the gift of this child, the faithful journeys of Joseph and Mary, the shepherds and the Magi, we learn of the power of angels to announce the Word, and assure us that there will be a translation to understand, a master teacher on the way to clear things up.

It is like thinking about the prospect of teaching your dog algebra in order to teach it how to fetch to follow the trajectory of a ball and bring it back to you. It is not going to happen. But we well know we can draw that beautiful creature's attention to a shiny object, reinforce its behavior with praise, and maybe a treat or two, and soon enough it will be fetching the newspaper for its master.

In the same way, God who is infinite in majesty and power and wisdom, needed to find the way to connect with us, and explain to us what is important to the way of the Universe. Through the logos, the reason, the wisdom of a child; through the logos, the reason, the wisdom of the one who would lay down his life for the life of the world. Jesus Christ, the DNA of God.

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