

A Meditation for the Second Sunday of Advent

The smiling figure of the Infant of Bethlehem is a consolation to many people. What could be less threatening than a little baby?

And yet, that Bambino Gesu is the Son of God. When we see a newborn infant, the person has existed for only nine months. He or she has had little chance to function. The personality—the means by which the person interacts with the rest of the world—has hardly developed at all. Already there are the first cries, the first confrontation with reality. Soon there will be first smiles. A new person is beginning who will exist forever. For this reason every child conceived and born is a mystery.

But the Child of Bethlehem is not a new person. He always existed. He did not become God; He has always been God. Do not be deceived by His physical dependency. His body, like those of all new infants, must be held and supported. But His Person comes from beyond time and space and all limitations. His mother's heart is filled with the joy of all good mothers, but she also adores. As a devout Jew, she knew what it meant when the celestial messenger said to her, "He... will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David... and of His kingdom there will be no end"
(Luke 1:32-33).

Here is the first test of faith for the believer. Here is the mystery of God, and men dismiss it now as once they found no room for Him in the inns of Bethlehem. His coming is so shrouded in mystery, His being so incomprehensible; the human and divine, so incompatible, are now united. But we want to take the easy way out. It is a myth, a fairy tale.

This Child will grow to be a man. He will speak the truth as no one has ever spoken it. "I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth" (John 18:37). Truth must always be received with joy, awe, and gratitude. This is how we must receive this Child and learn from Him, because He will say, "Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37).

Prayer

Jesus, My Savior, teach me the truth. Speak to me in the depths of my heart that I may return prayerfully in my thoughts to the humility of the manger. Let your grace drive away my fear of a humble God with the body of an infant and the soul of a human child linked to the Person of God. Be the truth for me. Let me bow my stiff neck before the living Truth, which is so far beyond my limited mind. Amen.

--Meditation and Prayer by Fr. Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R.

