**The Nativity of the Lord, Year B December 25,**

**Simply God**

At this time of year, we as Christians are often challenged by questions about the historicity of the Christmas story. Skeptical friends and family ask, "Isn't all that bible stuff about Christmas, virgin births and wise men just children's fairy stories?" The answer is actually both yes, and no.

The Christmas story is a story about God, and we can never speak of God in simple, concrete, historically verifiable terms. In describing the ineffable truth that God became human the Evangelists must necessarily strain the limit of paradox: a virgin conceives and gives birth, miraculous stars and angelic hosts appear in the night sky, shepherds in fields and astrologers from afar gather in silent awe as the magnificence of the Divine Being becomes the insignificance of a human child.

The central truth of Christmas is that God assumes human being not in a King Herod or an Augustus Caesar, but in King David's poorest heir; not in the shakers and movers of mercantile or marital society, but in the poor and despised on the margins of that society. God chose to refresh the world not through the clash of arms, the machinations of politics or the commerce of macroeconomics.

Rather, the Divine Word sought to penetrate and transform the world by living the simplest and lowest of human lives, inaugurated by the meanest of human entries upon the stage of life — the birth of a baby into a hidden world of poverty and insignificance. The Christmas story transcends and challenges all historical precedents and expectations.

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