

## Christmas Eve

2020

Christmas Eve has always been the Holy Night or the Sacred Night. This is due to the understanding that Our Lord was born at night. Actually it does not say in scripture that He was born at this time. Scripture lets us draw our own conclusions and make our own assumptions. Neither, Mathew or Luke mention the actual time of this great event.

However it seems to have been an early Christian tradition to place Our Lord's birth in the evening. This may have been universally understood by the early Christians and there was no need to state the obvious in scripture. All of this does not take away from the importance of this great event.

Celebrating Our Lord's birth at night has so many powerful and meaningful elements. Night has an unusually atmosphere about it. Most of us work and carry out our daily functions in the day. The Sun certainly makes it easier. Night also has an atmosphere of mystery attached to it. When it falls ones should be in their home eating supper and getting ready for the next day. As a child, playing at night with my friends was so special. We were not supposed to be out in it. Night became more fun if one of us had our dad's flashlight. We could stay out longer and play hide and go seek. Flashlights were great if we were building snow forts and tunnels at night. The flashlights helped to scatter the darkness so we could play and see what we were doing. Night was not so mysterious because we could play in it. Tonight

something far more mysterious will play out. God will become one of us. He will be born from a Virgin. The atmosphere of this evening is so different from anything we have ever known.

Usually tonight we would spread light and scatter the darkness and sing. All of our candles would be lit from the Christ Candle. We usually light candles in a dark church and sing Silent Night. This is a powerful act to light so many candles from one large candle and to watch the light spread throughout the church. Most important is the act of people sharing the light with those around them. The most powerful moment arrives when the entire church is filled with light and the last candle is lit. All while we sing Silent Night.

This act is so powerful because we participate in it. To disperse the darkness and to share and spread the light. In this simple act we become part of the nativity story in John's Gospel. The same nativity story that was set in the cosmos now plays out in Thalberg and Green Bay. John 1:4, "In Him was life and the life was the light of humanity, and the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it." Some translations say the darkness could not overcome the light. This simple act of lighting candles and singing reminds us that we are the children of light. We are the children of light that the Christ came for this evening. We are called to share the light and to spread the good news about the coming of the Christ child. He is the light and the life of those who believe in Him.

Rejoice and celebrate at home with your family. Light candles and sing Silent Night and keep this night Sacred and Holy. Candles, light and singing take on a powerful meaning tonight. We are called to share the light and to disperse the darkness in a hopeless world. Our Lord came

in the darkness of night to bring light and hope to humanity. As children of light we are called to be the hope and light to those around us.

Charito and I would like to wish all of you a healthy and happy Christmas and a somewhat normal 2021. I had this sermon written a week ago. I wondered if this was the right one. Then I received an email last night about the candle project and that confirmed my thinking. God bless you all, Pastor D.