

FIRST DAY OF THE CHRISTMAS NOVENA

Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17

December 17, 2004

Preaching by S. Catherine Marie Bazar

The closer we come to Christmas, the less there is to say. It's time to sit quietly and really ponder. I've been sitting in front of my window at night looking out at the sky and marveling at how that moon just stays right there where it belongs, and those stars remain in their forces, keeping their fires to themselves. Recently God has been very busy with a giant paint brush creating colors and patterns across the morning and evening sky. The marvel of a God whose creations stretch so far out into the universe, so far beyond what my puny mind can fathom and whose people are held with infinite love generation after generation often boggles me.

I once read that an atom bomb is 99% empty space and only 1% compressed energy. This is something like God on Christmas night, a God whose almighty knowledge, power, and loving is condensed and packed into a tiny seven-pound, helpless human baby boy! Just picture the wonder of it! Here God lies, totally at the mercy of other humans, unable to do for Himself. The secret of His coming is never in power, in destruction, but only in humility, love, and total reliance on others. When will the world learn this?

This is the time when we all need to sit before the Baby and empty ourselves as God did, divest ourselves of all our gifts -- our talents, our importance, our great abilities, our necessary presence, our titles, our marvelous achievements -- and offer the same gift God gives to the world this season, emptiness! Simplicity at its finest! And with the emptying will come new growth, new beginnings, new blessings. Our finest gift to give is the one of recognized sheer nothingness.

Father Terry Richey once told the women at jail, "Christmas means having a tiny, helpless baby reaching out its arms and saying, 'Pick me up! It's good for me, and it's good for you!'" With His helplessness in our now empty arms, we can then fill ourselves with all the condensed Divine Energy within this tiny Baby. "Emmanuel, Emmanuel, what are we that you have loved us so well?"