

Christmas B

My wife is a nurse
So she has to work holidays – this year she works Christmas.
So we adjust how we celebrate, when we do what – just like so many others who work holidays.

If you think about what was going on in Bethlehem – it was a workday.
A day like any other

Jesus was born during a tax census
People were busy - Getting to their hometown
 Digging up birth records
 Filling out their 1040, dealing with town officials
 Long lines, traffic
 Crowds so thick, not a hotel room to be found

When angels announce the birth of Jesus
Not to priests or prophets
To shepherds who were on the job – working the night shift out in the fields

Jesus entered the world of flesh and blood
He didn't come in the sacristy, or the temple, or some holy place
He came in the rough and tumble, workaday world of people with jobs to do,
 With fields to tend, stress, and all the anxiety of life.
 With the government breathing down their necks at tax time.

If the Good News of Christmas is to be relevant it must go beyond the religion section of newspaper

Birth of Jesus takes place in the middle of life's swirl & touches every part of life
In Church, At the State House, In our jobs, In our families – Jesus touches all of it

- Promise of Christmas – As Isaiah puts it –
Oppressor's rod will be broken – **satan and sin are defeated**
Messiah's rule will be a time of peace and justice, without end.
IN EVERY ARENA OF LIFE, FOR ALL PEOPLE – in midst of our day to day lives
No matter where you've been, what you've done, how you've lived – Jesus came for you.
- It's also the message of Titus
We don't hear Titus that often – only 3 chapters long (only 1 sentence).
Titus says that the grace of God appeared to save ALL
Christ came to cleanse a people as His own & ALL who follow Christ are that people
The reason Jesus came is EASTER

We are redeemed

Jesus is born to embrace the beloved – WE are the beloved.
Jesus is born – for Easter – Salvation!

As we go forward – let us praise and thank God for His Son, our salvation.
As, together, we begin our journey towards Easter