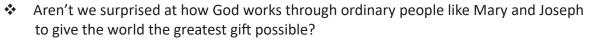


Vol. 7, No. 22 Christmas Day 2022

Christmas Day

1st Reading: Isaiah 62: 11-12 2nd Reading: Timothy 3: 4-7 Gospel: Luke 2: 15-20





Jesus, the Christ.

- Aren't we surprised at who God chooses as the first human messengers of Jesus' birth?

 Lowly, uneducated, poor, on the margins of society,

 nameless shepherds with no influence whatsoever.
- Aren't we surprised at who the child was?

One of us in all ways, except sin.

Aren't we surprised by Jesus' deep desire <u>for us</u>?

To know him more intimately, to love him more intensely and to follow him more closely.

Haven't there always been surprises surrounding Christmas? I remember wishing for and longing for some special things to happen for Christmas. I remember waiting with joyful anticipation for them to come, to be a reality.

I have become certain that such longings, hopes are also true for God. God is deeply, totally in love with each one of us. This is **the message** of Christmas. And that is the greatest surprise of all: *Christmas is God's love story*. Our world was turned upside down some 2000 years ago when God's message was delivered to the world in Jesus: "God so loved the world..." And that love will never, ever stop----it will continue to be so until we finally allow that love to engulf our world personally and collectively.

—Margaret Johnson, OSU Moscow, Idaho