

## No Ordinary Baby

*“Joy to the world, the Lord is come.” Let all of us receive our King. Amen.*



- There's really nothing in world quite like holding newborn baby. Something about holding baby, joy. If parent, you know. Emotional, physical highs, lows of pregnancy; waited 9 months; excitement, nervousness builds as due date arrives; finally when your own daughter or son is born, everything else fades into background. Holding your baby; seeing God's marvelous creation of human life; look in eyes, see person, future, a life. I've held my own newborn 3 times, most recently in April with daughter Abigail. Lot of happiness here at St. John's; 3 families, young couples in cong are experiencing joy, excitement of holding newborn baby. Dahlbergs (girl), Waldschmidts (boy), Hahlbecks (girl). Now they know: nothing in world that fills you with such joy quite like holding newborn.
- Now take that joy, multiply times thousand, ten thousand; begin to understand, experience joy of Christmas. Today Christmas Day, day we pick up out of manger and hold newborn baby Jesus with arms of faith; see God's marvelous creation of life; look into eyes of baby Jesus and see real person, future, life; and more: we see a Savior, King of kings, God from God, Light from Light... And we realize: no ordinary baby! This baby we hold today, Christmas Day, is no ordinary baby!
- Opening words of book of Hebrews (2<sup>nd</sup> lesson) make it clear that Jesus is no ordinary baby! **Vs. 1-2a.** Jesus is Son of God, also voice of God, because God speaks through Jesus. In past, through prophets – names for Jesus. Children's Christmas service white banners: from OT, like Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, King. In past, prophets; now, through Jesus. Voice, word of God. **John 1 (Gospel), “In the beginning was the word...”** Jesus is no ord baby: word of God, the voice through whom God speaks to us.
- **Vs. 2b.** Heir receives inheritance. As God's Son, Jesus inherits all glory of heaven. But Gal 4: God's Son makes us sons, daughters of God by faith. **“Since you are his child, God has made you also an heir” (Gal 4:7).** So because Christ is an heir of God, we are, too! We have inheritance waiting for us in heaven with Jesus free from pain, suffering, sin – because of this baby born at Christmas, who shares inheritance with us. No ord baby.
- **Vs. 2c.** Christmas song on radio: “The Trinity begins.” Not correct. Jesus is eternal, from before beginning. In beginning Jesus created heavens and earth; made universe. Baby is helpless; can't feed, change itself; walk, talk; helpless. But baby Jesus is different. May look helpless like other babies; no ord baby. This is almighty, all-powerful, eternal, ‘speak into being’ creator of universe.
- **Vs. 3a** – “being.” When look at baby, sometimes see features of parents (examples). When look at Jesus, looking into face of God, seeing God himself. Don't be fooled by cute cheeks, eyes staring into Joseph's, little hand that holds Mary's finger; no ord baby. **“Radiance...exact rep of his being.”** Everything that is God (glory, power, love of God), it all radiates forth from Jesus and is seen in his holy face. If you want to see God, look into face of Christ, because, as Jesus said, **“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn 14:9).**
- All these attributes of baby Jesus (voice of God, heir of God, glory of God, creator of world), all point to the one, real reason Christ came, the singular mission of Jesus. **Vs. 3c.** Jesus came to provide purification for wicked, shameful sins we ever have and will commit against loving God. Came to live holy life, to follow God's will perfectly for us who could not, did not. Came to offer up that holy life as sacrifice to God on altar of cross, where took upon himself all our sins and made payment for

them with his own blood. Just like OT priest, who offered sacrifices to purify people, so also Jesus sacrificed his life to purify us. **“The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” (1 Jn 1:7).** Here: **“provided purification for sins.”** No ord baby. This baby Jesus, lying in manger, is also lying under shadow of cross, because that’s his future, his mission, why he came: to lay down life to purify us from all sin, then take it up again in his resurrection and **“[sit] down...”**

- Where Jesus is right now. “He rules the world with truth and grace.” But also with us today, as we celebrate birth and worship Savior. He is Emmanuel, the God who is with us, today and every day, and who fills us with joy in his birth. Nothing quite like joy of holding your newborn baby in your arms, looking into that beautiful face, praising God for this precious gift. Some among us experiencing that this week for very first time. But today we sing, “Joy to the world, the Lord is come.” Jesus, Lord & Savior & King, has finally come; no ord baby. Today we hold him in arms of faith and look into his beautiful baby face, and we see radiance of God, who has come to be with his people, purify us from sins, bring us to our inheritance in heaven. “Joy to the world, the Lord is come.” Let all of us receive our King. Amen.

### **Hebrews 1:1-3 (NIV 2011)**

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. <sup>3</sup>The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.