

Untitled (37)

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Preacher: David Bena

[0:00] Christmas Eve at Holy Trinity Parish, a haven of rest and peace from the confusion of the world.

! Welcome and Merry Christmas!! The innkeeper.

And he had seven words to say in the play. The seven words were, there is no room in the inn. But Johnny had a soft heart.

He could not imagine turning the Holy Family away. And so when Joseph came and knocked on the door and asked if there was room, he answered, there is no room in the inn, but come on in anyway for cookies and chocolate and milk.

Well, okay, that's kind of where we are sometimes. My question to you is, do you have room for Jesus? Let's talk.

[1:10] Every Christmas Eve, we read the Nativity story from the Gospel of Luke. And as I mentioned last Sunday, Luke, reportedly the author of the Gospel of Luke, and I think he was, as well as being a physician, was a bona fide historian.

And so you can bet he looked for the facts when he wrote down the Nativity story.

You can bet he interviewed the Virgin Mary and got the facts. But one thing he didn't do, he did not spend a lot of time giving details.

And so one of the details Luke does not discuss, and which comes to mind for me, is why were Joseph and Mary not accompanied by a parent when they came for the census?

Oh, I know why they were in Bethlehem for the census. Caesar on the Isle of Capri said, we need to increase taxes. We're going to do a census. Just see how many people are out there.

[2:24] Everybody returns to their ancestral home and is counted. I know that. But the question is, why was there no mama with Joseph and Mary to help with the birth?

Mamas want to do that sort of thing. Could it be that everyone in the village knew that this couple was pregnant but not married?

They were engaged all right, but they were not married. Humiliating for the parents. Oh sure, you could say, well, it was the Holy Spirit that did it.

And how many people will believe that? It was a stigma. And so one of the reasons why there was no room for them in the inn in Bethlehem.

Pregnant, not married, ostracized. Well, whatever. That's a detail we'll never know until we get to heaven.

[3:26] But we do know there was no room for them. There was not even any milk or cookies. And so they had their baby in a lowly and smelly stable.

And they laid this new baby Jesus in a cattle trough. Wrapped him in rags. Not a beautiful service like we have tonight.

We have room for Jesus in our worship tonight. But when he was born, there was no room for him.

Just two young parents, maybe early teens, all alone, away from their parents, having a baby.

And later, a few shepherds to wish them well. And that situation has kind of been that way ever since. There's not a lot of room for Jesus in the world today, is there?

We've seen some of that change. City parks used to have nativity scenes. Not anymore. Public schools used to have nativity plays.

[4:34] Not anymore. And we even this year, for the first time, had formal complaints against people lighting up their houses with decorations for Christmas.

The idea it was not inclusive to decorate your house when people who don't celebrate Christmas go by and will be offended.

Not much room for Jesus in today's world. But you know what's a funny thing about Jesus? We may not have much room for him, but he finds room.

It's been said that Jesus has room for bars, bedrooms, and boardrooms. He finds room to touch our lives.

There's the story of little Marie, a very poor third grader. She came to school usually with ragged clothes, her hair not combed.

[5 : 37] She qualified for both free breakfast and free lunch. Kids didn't much play with her. She was a little bit smelly. Mrs. French liked her and tried to care for her.

And she noticed on this day, Marie came with a beautiful coat. A nice blue coat with dark blue, large buttons with fake pearls on them.

And she said, Marie, where'd you get the coat? And Marie said, well, the Salvation Army gave it to me for Christmas. It's beautiful. And this happened to be Mrs. French's last day because she was going to have a baby.

She was going on maternity leave. And a couple of the class moms had gotten a party up. And on this last day before Christmas, everybody was gathered around Mrs. French at her desk, giving her little gifts for the baby.

It was really exciting. Marie kind of hung back. Mrs. French noticed. And at one point, Marie reached into the trash can and got out some wrapping paper and went back to her desk.

[6 : 48] She didn't think much about it. But toward the end of the day, Marie handed her a gift and said, I hope your baby likes it. She noticed that Marie was missing a button on her coat.

When she got home, Mrs. French opened the gift. And there was a beautiful blue button with fake pearls with a note.

I hope your baby enjoys the gift. You see, Jesus found room. He found room for Mrs. French as she teared up thinking about this little girl giving it all.

Jesus finds room, doesn't he? He finds room for us. He'll always have room for you. You see, he loves you. He shows it in his birth as a bambino.

He finds room in your heart. Can you make room for Jesus? You know, back then, the oppressive Roman government did make room for Jesus.

[7 : 55] Thirty years later on a cross, in fact, without knowing it, they made enough room for Jesus to free you from eternity in hell and to birth you for heaven.

They found room for Jesus on the cross. That's my call of action for you tonight. Make room for Jesus in your heart. Tonight. And not just for a few minutes with milk and cookies.

But rearrange the furniture of your heart to make him the special guest. Forever, in fact, invite Jesus to move into your room, into your heart, into your soul.

Say this quietly. Jesus, right now, I make room for you in my heart. Come, Lord and Savior Jesus. May it be so. Merry Christmas. You be with you. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here.

[8 : 59] I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here.

I'm here.