

Christmas 1B RCL  
Trinity, Bend  
Isaiah 61:10—62:3  
Ps 147  
Galatians 3: 23—25, 4:4-- 7  
John 1: 1-18

We live in a very dark world. There are evil things happening all around us. Just turn on the news for 5 minutes and you will hear about all the negative things that are happening. From Washington, DC to Bend, OR. It's out there.

That is how things were when Christ was born, the Roman's ruled Judea, Herod was a tyrant, there were lots of negative things happening. They didn't have a 24 hr. news cycle. But word of mouth kept the negative things alive. Christ the light of the world came into this dark world.

When we are in dark times of our lives, those times when everything seems wrong, maybe you have been sick or your best friend is dying, or just watching the news is upsetting, only one thing can make a difference – light.

It is then that the light of Christ is available to us to make our situation better.

For those of us who accept the light of Christ our world changes. As St. Paul says we are adopted as children of God.

Adoption can have a radical effect on our lives. A number of years ago a couple in their mid-thirties came to our church in New Jersey. I made visit to them as I did all newcomers. It was then that they told me the story of the adoption of their children.

This was a successful, professional couple. They wanted to start a family but were unable to conceive children. So they hired a lawyer who could help them with an adoption. They soon learned that it would not be possible to adopt a baby so they agreed to an older child.

Then one day they got a call. There were two children, a brother and sister in Texas who were being put up for adoption. Would they be interested?

Well they really only applied for one, but why not? It would be such a shame to separate this brother and sister and they could easily afford to raise two children. They learned all they could about the children.

The little girl was six and the boy was four. Their mother was into drugs and was not capable of raising them.

So she gave them to their grandmother to raise. The problem was grandmother was older and now was ill and she could no longer care for them either. The decision was made to put them up for adoption. These children had been raised in a very poor household. Seldom did they have clean clothes to wear or get enough to eat. Their grandmother sat them in front of the TV all day because that was the easiest way to care for them.

The couple was so happy they could hardly contain themselves. These would be the children they had hoped and prayed about for sooo long.

They prepared a bedroom for each child. Bought clothes and toys they thought the kids would like. Everything was set

The day finally arrived when they could go to Texas and pick up the children. The little boy and his sister came to the adoption site with only the clothes on their backs. The new parents greeted them lovingly and then took them on a flight back to New Jersey.

When they reached their home, a 2 story brick house, the little girl looked around with her eyes wide open and said, "Is this where you live?"

She couldn't believe that people really lived in such a big house. She had never seen such a thing before. Up until this time she spent her time in a small shack.

Her new Mom replied, "Yes, and it is where you now live too."

I think the same thing happens to us when we are adopted into the family of God. We can hardly believe that we are to be part of such a

loving family. We are called to live in a way that may be foreign to us. In a way that may not seem real.

That was probably how it was for those first people who came to see the newborn Savior on that first Christmas many years ago. Here was a child whose smile lit up the room. -- a child that radiated the love of God for His people.

I wonder if they knew they were in the presence of one who was different, one who would make a difference in their world.

We too have been asked to come into the presence of the child who brings light into our lives. The one who can change our world from one of darkness to one of light.

We are invited into the family of the One who wants us to know that we are loved. Loved so much that we may come to believe that we are in a new place – a place where the God of love looks upon us as family. A place where we have to live in love everyday of our lives.