

# The Sentinel-April 2018

## AND WAS MADE MAN

### PASTOR'S Easter Message



Martin Luther said that the miracle of our Lord's incarnation is the greatest miracle of all! The eternal Son of God took on human flesh and blood; became one with you and me. Imagine that!

If you stop and think about it, this reality divides all religions into two camps. One says Jesus is the Son of God, who for us and our salvation came down from heaven; and was made man. All the others religions claim that He was a good man; a moral example, but nothing more. There are only two religions in the world!

Martin Luther had a lot to say as he preached on John 1:14: *And the Word became flesh...* He wrote: "The dear fathers, I say, were amazed that the divine majesty assumed every aspect of this bag of worms, our human nature, except sin and guiltiness of death. He ate, drank, slept, waked, etc., but He was not born in sin as we were. To be sure, this is so indescribable and inexplicable that anyone who really believes it must needs wonder. Yes, heaven, earth, and every creature must be awe-stricken at the thought that God should regard man dearer and nobler than an angel, although man is really a wretched creature by comparison. God's preference for the human nature over the angelic might well arouse envy. But all this should make us meditate on the great glory that is ours. For the angels in heaven rejoice over the incarnation. This is why they constantly surround the Lord and serve Him. This is why they were about His grave when He arose from the dead."

St. Bernard (1090-1153) further deliberated on these words, deriving some very comforting thoughts from them. He said, "Now I can see that God my Lord is not angry with me; for He is my flesh and blood and sits at the right hand of the heavenly Father as Lord over all creatures. If He were ill-disposed toward me, He would not have taken on my flesh and blood."

Martin Luther continued his sermon with this moving illustration. "The following tale is told about a coarse and brutal lout. While the words, 'And was made man' were being sung in church, he remained standing, neither genuflecting (bending the knee) nor removing his hat. He showed no reverence, but just stood there like a clod. All others dropped to their knees when the Nicene Creed was prayed and chanted devoutly. Then the devil stepped up to him and hit him so hard it made his head spin. He cursed him gruesomely and said: "May hell consume you, you boorish ass! If God had become an angel like me and the congregation sang: 'God was made an angel,' I would bend not only my knees but my whole body to the ground...And you vile human creature, you stand there like a stick or a stone. You hear that God did not become an angel but a man like you, and you just stand there like a stick of wood!"

Once again, we will pull out all the stops as we gather to celebrate our Lord's physical resurrection from the dead. Our altar will be decorated with numerous Easter Lilies and other flowers. The fragrance will fill the air. The white cross, symbolizing victory will be proudly displayed and the white banners and paraments will adorn our chancel. Of all the things we can do to celebrate, nothing pleases our Lord more than when we fill the air with voices raised in unison singing the praises of the One who for us, was made man.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia!

*Pastor Szczesny*