

"The secret of genius is to carry the spirit of childhood into maturity." This quote from Thomas Huxley is easier said than done. We know how the cares and responsibilities, the hurts and the wounds, the failures and the losses of life can mount up and seem more real than joy, peace, love, and the yearnings of wonder, hope, and trust that seek and hunger for them. This is the part of our world and ourselves that is actually the most real and authentic, even when it is weak, fragile, and beaten down. It is what we see mirrored in the baby Jesus in the manger of Bethlehem and the adult Jesus on the cross of Good Friday. Christmas can be a time to reconnect with this deepest part of ourselves and the deepest part of reality, helping us to get back in touch with that 'spirit of childhood' - that 'inner Christ child' - which is our truest identity as a child of God and a brother and sister to everyone and everything that is. That is the true Christmas gift that we seek to give by seeking to become. On Christmas we hear that the "Word becomes flesh". It is also true that the "flesh becomes Word". This happens when we become an instrument of good news and glad tidings. This happens when the weak, wounded, and hardened flesh of our humanity becomes a gift to others and becomes enlivened, authored, created, and recreated anew by the deeper word and spirit of the divine, the sacred, and the holy that permeates everything that is. It is for us to open the eyes and ears of our hearts, minds and lives to the reality of this inner light so that the weary world and our weary hearts can rejoice with that childlike spirit of the inner Christ child again! Joy to the World, the Lord is come, in the hearts and lives of his people! So let heaven and nature sing!

Blessed & Merry Christmas!

Father Ray