

Pastor's Column

Rev. Michael Ratajczak
michaelr@stmoside.org
758-4100 x100

“A Letter to All My Brothers and Sisters”

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

It has been brought to my attention that many of you are upset that people are taking my name out of the season.

Maybe you have forgotten that I was not actually born during this time of the year and that it was some of your predecessors who decided to celebrate my birthday on what was actually the date of a pagan festival. Please know though that I do appreciate being remembered anytime!

How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own.

I do not care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate my birth, please just get along with each other, love each other! Now having said that, let me move on...

If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting my birth, then just get rid of a couple of Santa's and snowmen from your own front lawn and put in a small nativity scene.

If all my followers did that, there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be so many of them all around town.

Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a Holiday Tree, instead of a Christmas Tree. My Father made all trees! You can remember me anytime you see any tree! Decorate a grape vine if you wish: I actually spoke of that in a teaching that I did explaining who I am in relation to you and to what each of our tasks are. If you have forgotten that one, look up John 15:1-8.

If you want to give me a present in remembrance of my birth, here is my wish list (Choose something from it):

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way my birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely especially this time of year. I know! They tell me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of writing President Bush and complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out last year, why don't you write and tell him that you will be praying for him and his family this year. Then follow up. It will be nice hearing from you again!
4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts that you can not afford, and that they do not need, spend time with them! Tell them the story of my birth, and why I came to live with you down there. Hold them in your arms and

remind them that I love them.

5. Think of someone who has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
6. Did you know that someone in your city will attempt to take his/her life this season because they feel alone and helpless? Since you do not know who this person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile. It could make a difference. Also, you might consider supporting the local Hot Line—they talk with people like that every day.
7. Instead of nit-picking about what the retailers in your city call the Holiday, be patient with the people who work in those stores. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they are not allowed to wish you a “Merry Christmas,” that does not keep you from wishing them one!
Then stop shopping there on Sundays. If the store did not make so much money on that day, they would have to close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.
8. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary, especially one who takes my love and Good News to those who have never heard my name. You may already know someone like that.
9. Here is a good one! There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only have no Christmas Tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you do not know them (and I suspect that you do not) by some food and a few gifts and give them to some Charity which believes in me and they will make the delivery for you.
10. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in me and your loyalty to me, then behave like a Christian. Do not do things in secret that you would not do in my presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of my Disciples.

P.S. Do not forget! I am God and I can take care of myself. Just love me and do what I have told you to do. I will take care of the rest.

Check out the list above and get to work. Time is short.

Make sure that you have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember!

Your Brother and your Master,
Jesus of Nazareth