

This reflection was written on January 3, 2023 based on the first letter of Saint John, chapter 2:29-3:3 by Father John Lapointe, Pastor Emeritus of St. Robert Bellarmine Church, Johnston, RI.

When I read the verse in today's first reading saying "We are all children of God", it reminded me that by Christ's birth in Bethlehem Jesus became not only our savior, but also our brother. In effect making all of us sisters and brothers in him.

In the post New Year noise and hassles, we can sometimes lose track of the basic message of Christmas: That we are called to be an "incarnational" people...trying to make God's love more human and real by what we say and do each day.

Some years ago an author named Elizabeth Scalia wrote about this as follows: "One evening while awaiting his train at Penn Station, my elder son was approached by a disheveled and mildly "aromatic" middle-aged woman who said she was hungry and wondered if he might spare her some change.

Instead, he walked with her to a food stand and bought her a hamburger, fries and a drink. As she ate, he sat with her and they chatted pleasantly.

When I asked him why he didn't simply hand her a few dollars and keep walking, (which is what I would have done), he said that would have seemed "dismissive" of her humanity; that this woman was as deserving as anyone else of being seen, heard and known, even for a little while."

As you and I walk into the New Year, all of us by our ordinary daily choices and conversations are called once more to be "incarnational" people. Like John the Baptist, we are asked to point out Christ to others. Remember, today, you and I might be the only copy of the gospel that someone else may see in their life.

May we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, our Savior, our brother and our friend, and pray for his grace.