



He saw it all.

He didn't miss a thing.

Hours and days of planning and working and lovingly reflecting on how to welcome the Christ Child in your family... how to bring smiles to faces and memories to little hearts... Christmas shopping, menus, grocery lists, and hours of cooking dishes hoped to bring celebration and connection among family and friends. Always with a deep love, sometimes with a little stress and fatigue, stealing the precious moments of silence and prayer you can during this busy time, resolving to keep your heart and home centered on Christ and his coming.

The day comes, we celebrate with Him, in Mass, in each other. We laugh, we serve, we give, we receive.

He sees it all. And he smiles with love, with gratitude. The peace-creating smile of an infant, the deep and eternal smile of God who became a baby so we would know what that Divine smile looks like on a flesh and blood human face.

He was there, enjoying the family, friends, food, and most of all, your heart which gave itself in love and service to Him. He was there, giving through you, serving through you, loving through you. And the joy, the memories you hoped for, he made happen, through you.

He was there, praying in you. Gazing at you gazing at him in your heart. Grateful for the warm cradle of your love to welcome him.

We celebrate in gratitude for the coming of the Christ Child, and the Giver of all gifts looks at us in gratitude for the gift of love we give Him.

It's enough to humble us into holy silence, the silence of the day after Christmas, when we can sit quietly with Mary, and ponder in our heart the miracle of yesterday and what it means for today and tomorrow.

We look at him in prayer, on this quiet morning, and ask him for one more gift. In our hearts we know he is asking us for the very same gift.

'Stay with me,' we beg. 'Stay with Me,' he asks in return.

**Cradling the Christ child in our hearts, holding him who holds us, all we can say is thank you, and look forward to the days and years ahead, together. Because of Christmas**