

## First Sunday after Christmas, 27/12/2015 at Holy Trinity

### Luke 2:41-52

Here we are two days after our Christmas celebrations with the Baby Jesus lying in a manger after being born in a stable and all the hype that goes with that and now this morning's Gospel reading confronts us with an adolescent Jesus.

It is a lonely episode from Jesus' years between his birth and the beginning of his public ministry.

By way of contrast, these days we want to know details of upbringing, family ties, friendships, education, adolescence, life changes and early employment.

The photo album would come out showing the baby photos, family and school photos, sporting photos and all the other things that are considered important in life.

These things are important to us to-day because we take personhood as individual.

We want to know about the individual, the good, the bad and the quirky.

If we were writing the Gospel to-day, we would want more detail about the individual – Jesus.

Did he cry much: was he a good sleeper: how did he relate to others in the family: could he qualify for a PhD at age 11 and so much more?

The Gospel writers as we have them are satisfied when they concentrate on perhaps a couple of years at the end of Jesus' life.

Their focus is theological.

It is about God and it is in enhancing our understanding of God that it is about Jesus.

The formative years, in fact the first thirty years of Jesus' life were not important for Matthew, Mark and Luke because their focus was on an event rather than a personality.

That event was God's action for the salvation of humanity and the coming of the Kingdom of God.

It was in this event that Jesus was to play a part.

This gap in the narrative between birth and the beginning of public ministry is not going to be filled with the recording of this episode.

It does, however, tell us that the boy Jesus is human enough.

Present day parents of teenagers or “would be” teenagers who insist on “doing their own thing” will know Mary and Joseph’s experience.

They may well have cried, “Why is he doing this to us?”

They are not, however, the heroes in this episode, Jesus is.

He had a right to stay behind.

He was about his Father’s business.

This wouldn’t wash with most parents to-day.

This episode is summed up in the words “Jesus grew in wisdom and maturity and favour with God and with people.”

The family of Jesus, however, did not really understand.

Later on, during Jesus’ ministry, his family was not necessarily on his side. They did not understand.

The majority of parents can relate to this episode.

Why doesn’t, he/she, tell us what he/she is doing, or where he/she is going?

Why don’t they keep in touch?

Why is he/she doing this to us?

And then the conversation: “Where have you been?” “Nowhere”. “What are you doing?” “Nothing”. “How was school to-day?” “All right.”

This episode tells us that Jesus is a genuine human being in a human context who grew up and matured as you and I grew up and not someone who landed complete from outer space.

This Jesus is the one whom God anointed to declare and live out the good news of love, salvation, liberation and the Kingdom of God.

Revel then in God’s love, salvation, liberation and Kingdom, worship with humility and rejoice with unspeakable joy for God has come to share our humanity that we might share his divinity.