

***By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor***

With just about two weeks until Christmas, the most anticipated holiday of the year, there are a lot of things on people's plates—decorating their homes, getting the Christmas cards mailed, parties/gatherings and shopping. Some people get to this time of the year and panic because there is so much to do.

Yet, I don't believe that's what Jesus had in mind as the celebration of his birthday nears. Anticipation is wonderful and, in fact, that is what this Advent season is all about, anticipating His arrival. Yet, we allow ourselves to get mixed up in the busy-ness of all that is planned around the Christmas season, that we may forget what it's all about. I know I've been guilty of that.

Every time I get bogged down myself this time of year, I take a minute and go back to a memory I have of when our oldest daughter (now 28) was only two and a half and Christmas was near. Of course, working fulltime with a two-year-old at home was challenging, but like many young Moms today, we made it work. We talked a lot about Santa with her then, and how she needed to be a good little girl if she expected some gifts under the tree.

As we attended church one Sunday close to Christmas, I'm sure my mind may have been wandering about all the things I had to get done yet. But even a two-year-old can put you in your place. With our church's Nativity scene in clear site near the altar, she blurted out at one of the quiet times that she wanted to see Baby Jesus.

I remember feeling a bit small then that a two-year-old even knew what was most important this time of year. I haven't forgotten that day. As I put out each of my Nativity scenes every December (my favorite part of decorating), it comes back clearly what this season is all about. Our President may have considered planning a "non-religious Christmas" this year, according to his social secretary, and not even display the creche in the White House (he ended up bowing to the pressure, however, and it's now up), we instead need to listen to our hearts and remember what Christmas is about, after all.

It often takes a child, like the Child Jesus who came here over 2,000 years ago, to remind us of what really is important at this time of year. It's good to enjoy all of what comes with the Christmas season, but at the top of that list should be the real reason we celebrate—Jesus Christ coming into the world!