

So there's this guy, and he's always forgetting his wife's birthday, and she gets angry with him because she never gets any presents because he's always forgetting. She drops hints before her birthday but nothing works. So when he forgets her birthday again, she says to him, "Look, Christmas is coming. You haven't remembered my birthday in years. You're going to have to make up for this. I expect a really nice gift. I expect something that will go from 0 to 200 in two seconds. If I don't get it, it's over." He gets really nervous. It sounds expensive, but he goes out to buy something that goes from 0 to 200 in two seconds. Christmas Eve they snuggle up around the tree, and he hands her a box. She looks pleased, but curious. She rips off the wrapping paper and pulls out her gift: a brand new bathroom scale. She nearly clobbered him with it.

It is hard to get just the right gift for just the right people. Even Santa has a hard time matching everything up. When one family has several children, Santa tries to be fair. He doesn't want one child to get more than another.

Students finishing up their semester want the right grade from their teachers. Teachers want students to be fair when taking tests and writing papers. Our local businesses want to do right by their customers.

Our country is a land of opportunity where anyone rich or poor is supposed to have a chance, but we don't always live up to that ideal. Hurricane Katrina revealed the disparity between rich and poor in New Orleans, but the same problem exists elsewhere. It is hard to be fair.

Even in our personal relationships, we want to treat all people alike, but we don't. We are kinder to those who attract us than we are to those who repel us.

At home, at school, at work and throughout our society we believe in fairness, but we don't always achieve it.

Christ was born for everyone. Jesus came into this world for the rich and the poor, the healthy and the sick, the smart and the stupid, the careful and the forgetful. He came for us all. He is God's gift to us, the right gift for the right people.

The psalm we sang at mass tonight invites all the people of the world to sing to the Lord and announce his salvation. It summons non-people as well: the heavens, the sea, the plains, the trees are all called to rejoice for this reason: The Lord comes to rule the world with justice. The Lord comes – Christ is coming into our world tonight, just as he did on that first Christmas. He will be our ruler, but not one who shows favors to a few. He will rule with justice; with fairness he will rule all people.

God gives us life; God gives us love. God blesses each of us with Jesus, our Savior, Christ the Lord, who is born for us today.