



We do this thing, as a culture with Christmas, where we hyper-focus on that night in the stable. We romanticize the story, pretending that Jesus didn't even cry. And then we all go home to our turkeys and our presents, and we turn a blind eye to what happens next in the story. For what happens next is actually very sinister.

King Herod gets word that this child has been born and he's so threatened that he gives the terrifying order that all male children under the age of two should be killed. And Mary and Joseph and Jesus have to flee as refugees to Egypt.

Unfortunately, this same story continues to play out. It is estimated that there are over 80 million displaced people in the world today and that about 40% of them, 35 million of them, are children. And just like we turn a blind eye to the second part of the Christmas story, we most often turn a blind eye to the suffering of all these people, of all these children.

Every once in a while, we're woken from our reverie. We're forced to see a beautiful Syrian boy washed up on a beach. We're forced to hear that a pregnant woman and children have drowned in the English Channel, trying to get to safety.

The diocese of Islands and Inlets makes a small contribution to helping refugees. In the past number of years, we've welcomed over 300 refugees, and there are over 100 more who are waiting to come.

And so, I invite you this Christmas season to stay tuned with the story. To think about how the Christ child only got to grow up to live and teach and heal because his parents left everything behind to keep him safe. And so, let's continue to celebrate the Christmas season and most importantly, let's play our part in the Christmas story. Let's be the ones who welcome the refugees home, who make sure that every child of God has a safe place to call home, so that they can grow into their God-given potential. Amen.

Merry Christmas.

