

The Night Before Christmas on Bayou Lafourche

2008

Twas the night before Christmas,
and two-thousand-eight had finally passed,
as I sat down to write this,
I realized it would be my last.

The churches were all decorated
with love and heart-felt care,
and snuggled warm in the hearts of the people,
the baby Jesus—he was there.

And Father Jamin down in Labadie,
and me with you right here,
we had all just settled down
from a really crazy year!

Gas prices and the stock market
so often up and down
some days you smile
and some days you frown.

And what about the weather?!
It stormed, rained, and blew.
But what an awesome gift
when the snow came too!

TIME Magazine called it
the “year of ups and downs.”
True—just notice the blue tarps
still seen in many towns.

Gustav came through here
and hit where he was aimin’;
but we had a lot of good help;
thank God for Father Jamin.

People young and old
picked up branches and raked up leaves;
during this time of crisis
no one was afraid to roll up their sleeves.
To the needy we gave out

food, water, and ice;
and, man, when we got our power back
that surely was nice!

Generators, brown water,
and the heat almost brought us to our knees,
but you got us through, Lord,
THANKS! I was so sick of M.R.E.'s!

This year had many high points too;
the Olympics were great;
everybody cheered
when Michael Phelps won eight!

But still, natural disaster and more terror
at home, around the world, and, it seems, on every side;
in Myanmar, China, Mymbai,
almost half-a-million died.

History and time march on;
they won't stop for me and you.
Some who passed from us this year?
Charleton Heston,
Heath Ledger,
and Sir Edmund Hillary,
to name a few.

We watched a lot of TV,
so the researchers say;
the year's top 3 shows?
The Shield,
Mad Men,
and the Presidential Debates?! No way!

They say more people voted
this time than ever before.
It seems as though 2009
will open another new door.

Some voted this way
and some voted the other;
but we must work together,
for we are all sister and brother.

The Pope even came to America,
to bring us hope of something new;
our Governor and our Bishop
came to see us after the storm too.

There have been many changes,
and there are more yet to come.
Next year we'll have a new pastor.
I wonder where he will hail from.

So, here it is—it's Christmas,
another year almost done;
but the birth of the Christ-child
reminds us of all the victories we have won.

Twelve years for me:
more good times than bad ones
and, yeh, even cancer;
we all need to smile
and think of Santa, Rudolph, and Prancer!

And trust me when I say this,
when July comes and to my new assignment I will roam,
I will proclaim to you all,
"this place will always, always be my home!"

Merry Christmas, everyone!

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