

The story begins with the King's acceptance of the fact that he has fallen in love with a peasant girl.

Then there is the realization that a king can never marry a peasant. Royalty always marries royalty.

But the king had great power so he could marry the peasant if he wanted to.

But after further speculation it became clear to the King that if he married the peasant and remained king there would always be something missing in their relationship. His future wife would admire his kingship and that would prevent her from ever truly loving him. The gap between peasant life and royal life was too great. She would always be conscious of his royal status.

Then another thought entered the King's mind. He could resign his kingship and become a peasant like her. Then he could propose one peasant to another. But that plan could backfire if after he gave up his position she rejected him thinking he was a fool for giving up so much.

So what would the King do?

The author of this story, Danish theologian Soren Kierkegaard never finished the story. This is where he left it and he did that for two reasons. One, how the story ended was not the point of the story. The love that the king had for the peasant was the focal point of the story. Imagine the type of love that would drive a king to consider changing tradition or

even more amazing to even have him contemplate giving up his throne completely.

The second reason the story didn't have an ending was because the story is not over yet.

Kierkegaard designed this story to describe the relationship that God has with all of us. So this story is still being written. Kierkegaard meant for the king to be God and for the peasant girl to be all of us.

Even though realistically God is more than royalty he is divine and God's love for us is infinite in its scope, the rest of the story is the same.

God could have loved us and stayed divine totally but the gap between us would have been insurmountable. So God became one of us in the

form of Jesus Christ thus giving up the opportunity to know God in a way that would not overpower us.

By allowing his son to enter into the world, God was able to express his love in ways that we could relate to.

As we conclude this church year, this would be an ideal time for us to examine our relationship with God and see for ourselves how God was able to love us and shower us with his grace.

It means we need to look back over this past year and recall the moments when God made himself present in the people we encountered, the places we visited, and the spiritual gifts we received. I challenge all of you to take some time over this next week, some time

before the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Advent season, to review your Catholic life and recognize the many ways that God touched you, loved you, and defined you with his royal power and glory.