

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

There, in a manger in Bethlehem, there, in an obscure Judean village, there, to a bewildered Jewish carpenter and his Virgin bride, there did God change all time and eternity. For there the Immutable God changed.

There He who is without beginning or end was born in time. There the course of human history changed, for the God who made man was born of a woman. There the Timeless One was brought forth an Infant

The angels and archangels and all the company of heaven saw the universal, cosmic nature of that change. St Luke records that in the midst of that dark night, the heavens were torn open. The heavenly host could not contain its joy. The glory of the Lord dispelled the darkness in which confused and frightened shepherds stood, as the glory of the Lord shown upon them, as the Glory of the Lord was swaddled and laid in a manger.

The Prophet Isaiah foretold it, proclaiming: “Break forth into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem! For the Lord has comforted His people. He has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has made bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God!”

The Lord made bare His Holy Arm in the Infant Flesh of Mary’s Son, God’s Son, the Son of the Most High, David’s Son. Shiloh came according to Jacob’s Promise, according to Judah’s hope, and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

But first it was Shiloh that was obedient. Although Joseph was not His Father, still would that Infant Christ keep the Fourth Commandment perfectly. And to His true Father, the First Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity was perfectly obedient, perfectly faithful. For to which of the angels did He ever say “You are My Son, today I have begotten You?”, and again “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?”

So as God’s Son was born of the Virgin, then did all the angels of God worship Him. Then did the shepherds worship Him. Then did Mary and Joseph worship Him. They worshipped the Holy Infant in whom all the fulness of the Diety dwells, the same Christ, the same Savior, the same Lord you worship this day.

You worship the Incarnate Word, the Word that was in the beginning with God, the Word that was with God, the Word that is God, the Son conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary. As David’s Son He is David’s Lord, so too as Mary’s Son He is Mary’s Lord, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, enfleshed, in Bethlehem wrapped in swaddling cloths. He who the heavens can not contain was contained in a rude stable inside a lowly manger.

The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. The Eternal God assumed the flesh of a chaste daughter of Judah. She gave birth to God. So St. John the Divine, the Beloved Disciple, can write of Mary’s Son “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. That was true of the shepherds. That was true of Mary and Joseph, for who could comprehend the Holy Incarnation of the Eternal God?

But there was a greater darkness, and evil darkness. The True Light which gives light to every man came into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

So the Apostle writes that He through whom the world was made, being the brightness of the glory of God, "...and the express image of His Person and upholding all things by the word of His power", by Himself purged your sins. That is the world's darkness: sin. And that darkness has darkened you as well. So there, in Bethlehem, there, all those years ago, your life changed – your earthly life, and your eternal life.

For the Arm of the Lord made bare would be stripped of His vestments. The Body born of Mary would be bruised and torn, the Flesh the Eternal Word assumed would be pierced. The Son of God would be forsaken by His Father. In the darkness of Golgotha no angelic host would tear open the heavens, for the Glory of the Lord hung crucified. It is there that the Incarnate Son of God purged your sins.

For that He was born. He died so that as many as receive Him, to you He gives the right to become children of God, to you who believe in His Name; you who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. To you who were earthly and perishing He gives eternal life, by the remission of your sins by a new birth, your birth from above.

He defeated death, the enemy you could never defeat. And He who came down from heaven ascended into heaven. He who assumed human flesh has now assumed His rightful celestial throne. And in a Divine Mystery, He took your flesh with Him. So does the Apostle write "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom." That righteousness He makes yours, by grace, through faith in the Incarnate Son of God.

He makes that righteousness yours as you are washed in Holy Baptism, your birth from above. He makes that righteousness yours as the forgiveness of sins that He won is declared to be yours. He makes that righteousness yours as the Body born of Mary is united to bread and given you to eat. He makes that righteousness yours as His Blood, the Blood that brings the forgiveness of sins, is made your drink.

He changes your time as He who is eternal comes to you in time. He changes your eternity as He conveys to you, in love, in mercy, in grace, eternity in His presence. And you, together with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, rejoice.

So marvel at the greatest of the Divine Mysteries: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Sing with the angels. For the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us. Christ is born! A blessed Christmas!

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