



COME ADORE THE NEWBORN KING, CHRIST THE LORD

Sermon | Luke 2:1-16 | The Eve of the Nativity of our Lord



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Come, Adore, the Newborn King, Christ the Lord!

Grace and peace to you, whom the Lord has favored,
through Jesus Christ whose birth the angels announced
with glory to God in the highest. Amen

The sermon for the Eve of the Nativity of our Lord is
drawn from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the
second chapter. I invite you to hear these sacred words
once more.

Read: Luke 2:1-16

Both my wife's family and mine had this tradition of
inviting extended family members over for Christmas
lunch or supper.

My wife's family always gathered on Christmas Day itself.

My family, on the other hand, held our celebrations a few days before Christmas, when some relatives would come and stay with us. It became a gala time that lasted right into the New Year.

I don't know much about how invitations were handled in Shamona's home, but I do remember how it worked in mine. My grandma would call her brothers and sisters—six of them—and each of them had families of four to six people. Long-distance phone calls were made, and that was how the invitations went out.

After Shamona and I were married, we continued this tradition. We invited friends as well—some unchurched, and even non-Christians. These celebrations usually took place after Christmas Day. When we moved to Canada, we had no extended family here, and hardly any friends. Yet the desire to invite people over during the Christmas season remained.

So, we welcomed seminarian friends with their wives and children or professors, sending invitations through email or text message.

Inviting friends and family has always been a way for us to share the joy of Christmas—the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We invited the people God had placed in our lives—ordinary people, living ordinary lives.

Now, as I remember our small tradition of those invitations, it makes me marvel the way God announced the birth of His Son and sent out His invitation.

We heard in the Gospel reading that God sent His *angels* to the earth. How elaborate! How personal! How magnificent and glorious that moment must have been!

The night sky would have been filled with God's glory as the angel of the Lord appeared.

The bright splendour of God would have rendered the darkness of the night fading away before the brilliance of God's glory.

And the angel of the Lord came to the shepherds—ordinary people, living ordinary lives.

Yet at that moment, something *extraordinary* unfolded by God's own design—fulfilling the meticulous plan He had woven into creation from the very beginning.

In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light," and there was light—and it was good. God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1). And on the day when Jesus was born, another beginning dawned. The true Light of the world was revealed to the nations. (John 8)

The glory of the Lord was literally a burst of divine light breaking into darkness.

And this little child—being born in the thick of the night—would one day shine with such a light on His cross, that He would draw many out of the darkness of sin and death.

The very first witnesses of God's creation were the humble creatures of the earth—the cattle, the animals, and the birds of the sky (Genesis 1). And on the day of Jesus' birth, God's creation again stood as witness. Not only the animals of the stable surrounded Him, but the meek and lowly shepherds also beheld the miracle of God.

There, he lay in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes—the eternal Son of God in human flesh. In that moment, God Himself embodied perfect humility. And this same Jesus would one day declare blessed the meek and the lowly, promising them the inheritance of eternal life. (Matthew 5)

In the beginning, God *created* man in His own image, after His likeness. He breathed into them the breath of life and placed them in a garden filled with every good thing (Genesis 1).

And now, at Jesus' birth, the Creator Himself assumes the very flesh He once formed. Jesus comes as the perfect image of God—the true Adam—who would give His own blood as life for all who believe in Him, bringing them into His fold and providing for them out of His goodness and grace.

For these reasons, the angel of the Lord told the shepherds not to be afraid—not of him, nor of the sudden brilliance that dazzled and lit up the night sky.

Rather, they were to rejoice at the good news proclaimed to them: the birth of the Saviour, Christ Jesus the Lord.

Although Saint Luke records only the fear of the shepherds, we can rightly assume that Joseph and Mary—the parents of Jesus—would also have experienced some fear.

Most likely the fear of the unknown. They were travelling from Galilee to Judaea. In those days people had to navigate hills, valleys, and rugged terrain. It is estimated that Mary and Joseph journeyed nearly 145 kilometres over several days. Mary may have ridden on a donkey, but Joseph almost certainly walked the rough and uneven ground beside her.

They were compelled to travel to Bethlehem. Joseph belonged to the house and lineage of David. And according to the decree issued by Caesar Augustus, every household was required to register in its ancestral town. This was part of a census required for taxation purposes.

Most certainly, fear would have gripped many in those days. The earthly king, Caesar Augustus, demanded more taxes and greater wealth for himself.

And yet, in the midst of all this, a Child was born—laid in a manger among humble animals—a true King who would one day give His own life so that all might receive the riches of His glory.

While the earthly king sought luxury and power, the true King of the universe came into this world in all lowliness. He would bestow a heavenly inheritance upon all who believe in Him.

Dear fearful children of God, we who are also unworthy of the angel's proclamation — unto us a Child is born, the Saviour of the world.

He is the One who saves you and me from all our fears and forgives us all our sins!

As we walk the rugged and uneven paths of our lives, encountering grief, loneliness, guilt, nostalgia, longing, or even betrayal, the Saviour of the world, Jesus is with us in every discomfort and misery. He suffered the death of the cross to grant us the peace that comes only through Him. And Jesus tells us that if we mourn today, we are called blessed, for the greater comfort has already been provided by Him. (Matthew 5)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the coming of our Lord brings peace to the earth. This is what the heavenly host proclaimed as they sang praises to God. Saint Luke records that this peace comes from God to those with whom He is well pleased — those who do not reject His mercy but receive His invitation in faith upon hearing the Gospel is proclaimed.

Today Jesus invites you to gather as His little children for the celebration of new life.

He died and rose victorious, and by His death and resurrection He makes you new. And just as the shepherds went in haste to behold Him upon hearing the news of the Saviour's birth, so too we have come to adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Let us now depart with hearts filled with His love, His joy, and His peace.

Christ has made all things new — including you!

Now may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Him. **Amen.**

I wish you all a blessed Eve of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As the very word Christmas reminds us that it is—
"Christ's Mass," or the Divine Service in which Christ Himself comes to serve His people — I warmly invite you

to join us again tomorrow at 10 AM for the Christmas Day Divine Service, where our Lord gives His gifts and comes to us in His Holy Supper.

Now may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. **Amen.**

Vijay Samuel