

**“And behold, an Angel of the Lord
appeared to them and the glory
of the Lord shone upon them and
they feared with a great fear.”**

Luke 2:9

Dear children in Christ Who was born in the flesh of the Virgin,

The second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, in 12 verses, presents us all with an image of how we should live this feast of His Nativity.

“And shepherds were in that land keeping their sheep and observing the watches of the night over their flock” (Luke 2:8). As Christians, we must work to protect that flock for the salvation of which our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ was born in the flesh: The bishop as the primary shepherd, and all true Christians as ones who take up watches, keeping themselves and the rest of the flock safe.

“And behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone upon them and they feared with a great fear” (Luke 2:9). When does an Angel of the Lord appear to us and the glory of the Lord shine upon us? This happens when we are watching the flock, being alert for how we can avoid dangers both to our souls and to all the rational sheep. In our keeping watch will we be shown the glory of the Lord!

“And the Angel said unto them, ‘Fear ye not, I am announcing unto you a great joy for all the people’” (Luke 2:10). We must be in awe at the awesome birth according to the flesh of the God-man, never forgetting, however, that for us, the faithful, this is the greatest joy ever - Christ on earth to save us!

“For today is born unto you a saviour, Who is Christ the Lord in the city of David” (Luke 2:11). Christ is born in the city of His forefather according to the flesh; David the Prophet King. He is born in the city of David, to be the Great King and the fulfilment of the prophecies of His ancestor.

“And this shall be your sign: You shall find the Babe swaddled and in the manger” (Luke 2:12). Once again, today we find Christ in the midst of humble things: Not in huge cathedrals, but in the manger, where all the mysteries are revealed and we commune of His Body and Blood.

“And suddenly together with the angel a many-numbered army of heaven was hymning God saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and good-will among men’ (Luke 2:13-14). When men come to know the true Church, then and only then do they offer worthy praise to God on high.

“And it came to pass that as the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherd men said to each other, ‘Let us go up to Bethlehem and see this word that the Lord made known the event unto us’” (Luke 2:15). The obligation to go up to Bethlehem and see the Child is ours, and totally ours. We alone will give an answer if we have not gone up to Bethlehem and willingly sought after the One Whom angels themselves proclaimed.

“And they came quickly and found Mariam and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger” (Luke 2:16). Let us make haste today, and every day, to go find the Babe that we sometimes ignore, lying in the manger, awaiting our reciprocal love.

“And seeing Him, they realised the word spoken to them concerning this Child” (Luke 2:17). May we be made worthy to recognise Christ in our sufferings and in the cold winter night as the shepherds of old did!

“And all were amazed by what they heard the shepherds speak unto them” (Luke 2:18). When we hear of the salvation wrought for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, we are amazed at how He chose to redeem us.

“Mariam kept all these words, placing them in Her heart” (Luke 2:19). Who could be a greater intercessor for a sinful mankind than the Most Holy Theotokos, who bore Christ and kept all these mystical events in Her heart. May She also keep all of us in Her heart and be ceaseless in Her holy prayers for us. Then we shall be like the “shepherds who returned glorifying and praising God for all that they heard and saw as it had been spoken to them” (Luke 2:20).

Glorifying and praising God with you for all that has been revealed unto us,

