

Friday, December 4, 2015

*In that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for I bring you good news of great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." **Luke 2:8-11***

It is the season of splendid gifts. The greatest of these is the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ – a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger, born son of God and Son of Man. The splendor of the Christ gift in Jesus is stunning! Divinity poured over the face of the Earth, seeping through the dark divide, and wondrously embraced Heaven and Earth. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased!"

God's glory flooded that holy night. Imagine the dazzling glimpse of Heaven! It was the moment in which heaven and nature joined and rejoiced in the embodiment of salvation through the birth of the Son of God. Sacred and precious moments of heavenly connection are present and continue for us today in the splendid gift of our Christian faith and community in the Body of Christ – His Church. In grace and gratitude, His very presence enters us. As we abide in Christ and remain to live well in His Word, we unite with God's pure, perfect and gracious gift of love given to us in the bonding birth of the Christ Child. We touch the anointed threads interweaving heaven and earth when we live strong in Christ. Such a splendid gift! Unwrap it! Treasure, cherish and share it!

*Dear Heavenly Father, In Your beloved son, Jesus Christ, darkness was dispelled by the splendor of Your invincible light as You set to turn the world to right. In the radiance of Your son, Jesus Christ, heaven and earth connect. Focus our eyes on the light of what is pure, holy, just and good as we seek to abide in Your Holy Spirit, and express Your Word and will throughout the world. We thank You, Heavenly Father, for being our God, and for the splendid gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Annie Dougherty**