

Christmas, 2024

Reflection

What a miracle is Christmas!
What a miracle that God would choose to become human!
What a miracle that the incarnate God would choose to be born in a remote town in an occupied land!
What a miracle that God would choose a time of great turmoil,
though has there ever been a time not of great turmoil?
What a miracle that God would choose a young virgin to mother the Son—
and a young carpenter to be his foster father!!

What was God thinking?
What was Mary thinking?
What was Joseph thinking,
especially when he and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem with her in her ninth month?

And then there was no room for them to shelter—was this part of God's plan?
Did Mary start to wonder what she'd gotten herself into with her willing yes?
Did she ever think: God, you didn't tell me about this part of the deal?
Did she ever doubt?

Angels appeared, singing "Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on Earth!"
Shepherds arrived at the manger.
Were these enough to reassure Mary and Joseph? Did they also hear the message, "Do not be afraid"?
Could they have recognized the miracle of Christmas, or was it too soon?

Two thousand years later, do we recognize the miracle of Christmas?
Do we recognize its lessons:
God's ways are not our ways.
God is a God of surprises.
God chooses the lowly, the small, the humble.
God does not promise it's going to be easy, but God does send messengers to help us along the way.

Might we be some of God's messengers, too?
How do we share the miracle of Christmas—as givers and recipients both?

Let us join our voices with the angels:
"Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on Earth!"
"Do not be afraid."

A Christmas Prayer Poem

Loving God,

Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
and open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift
and good desires with every greeting.



Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning
make us happy to be your children,
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven,
for Jesus' sake. Amen. - [Robert Louis Stevenson](#)

Suggested Actions

Try to answer at least some of the questions in the Reflection above, especially the last few.

Celebrate the miracle of Christmas, not just the secular traditions, but also the true meaning of the *holy* day and season.

Think of ways you can be one of God's messengers, praising God and building peace in our troubled world, whether locally or globally. Consider reconciling with someone with whom you are currently in conflict or using nonviolent conflict resolution skills to help others close to you who are in conflict to ease the tensions that are keeping them apart. Help people on opposite sides of our very divided country see places where we hold much in common, for example a desire for safe streets, quality education, fair wages, and good health care. Write letters, make phone calls, sign petitions, or join a public witness to speak out and stand up against one of the many international conflicts ravaging our world today.

Visit the Pax Christi websites for more ways to be a Christmas messenger throughout the year: <https://paxchristi.net/>, www.paxchristiusa.org, www.paxchristinys.org and www.nypaxchristi.org. Also follow us on social media.