

Daily Advent Readings & Meditation - 2023



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Christmas Eve - December 24

24 Today's Texts:

Micah 5:2-5: Prophecy of the ruler from Bethlehem.

Luke 2:1-7: The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, fulfilling prophecies.

Micah 5:2-5

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give

them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn..



"Mary and Joseph seeking refuge in Bethlehem" by Bento Coelho da Silveira in the Paço dos Duques de Bragança, Guimarães. 17th Century.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maria_e_Jos%C3%A9_buscando_guarida_em_Bel%C3%A9m_\(Bento_Coelho_da_Silveira\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maria_e_Jos%C3%A9_buscando_guarida_em_Bel%C3%A9m_(Bento_Coelho_da_Silveira).png)

Today's Meditation: On this sacred night, the prophecy of Micah and the narrative of Luke intertwine, bringing to life a long-anticipated promise. Micah's words, spoken centuries earlier, foretold the birth of a ruler in Bethlehem – not just any ruler, but one whose influence would extend to the ends of the earth, bringing peace. Luke's account of Jesus' birth fulfills this prophecy, marking a pivotal moment in history. The birth of Jesus, in a humble setting, is a profound reminder of God's love entering the world in the most unexpected way. This event invites us to reflect on the nature of true power and leadership – one marked by humility, love, and a deep connection to the people. Tonight, as we gather to celebrate this miraculous birth, let us open our hearts to the transformative power of this divine love.

Something to Think and Pray About:

How does the story of Jesus' birth encourage us to seek for God's wisdom and love in the humble and unexpected places of your life?

- What does the fulfillment of ancient prophecies in Jesus' birth reveal to you about God's nature and relationship with humanity?
- How does the humble birth of Jesus in Bethlehem shape your understanding of true strength and leadership?

- In what ways can the story of Jesus' birth help you to embrace and share God's love in your own life?
- In what ways does the story of Christ's birth challenge, or perhaps inspire, your own approach to life and faith?

A Prayer For Today: Divine Mystery, on this sacred night of Christmas Eve, we are filled with awe at the wonder of Your love made manifest in Jesus. Guide us to embrace the humility and simplicity present in the story of His birth. As we celebrate this miraculous event, may our hearts be transformed by the depth of Your love, inspiring us to live with compassion, humility, and a deep sense of Your presence in our lives. Bless this night with Your peace and joy, as we hold in our hearts the wonder of Your love come down to earth. Amen.



Annunciation to the Shepherds, from the Emerson-White Hours, 1485-1490
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Annunciation_to_the_Shepherds_-_Emerson-White_Hours_-_Getty_Museum_Ms60.jpg