

December 22, 2023
20th Day of Advent

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. Luke 2:15-20

Luke 2 15-20 Thoughts and Meditation:

When have you heard the voice of an angel guiding you through a life situation? Did you immediately take the message and act upon it, or did you wait for more signs of what God wants you to do? In Luke 2:15-20 the shepherds lived most of the year outside, away from the townspeople tending to their flocks. Shepherds were considered lowly, ordinary people of the day. Yet, the angels choose *them* to tell of the newborn baby Jesus and to go to Bethlehem and see for themselves.

Once the shepherds arrived in Bethlehem, they found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When the shepherds had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told to them by the angels and their witness of this child.

Their testimony was spontaneous. The shepherds spoke from the heart and their words connected with the deepest needs of others. When you hear exciting news, it's hard not to share it. You don't think about yourself or the words to say – you are simply consumed by the good news. When a baby is born in your family, you can't stop talking about your child or grandchild. You can't resist pulling out the photos as the news brings a smile to your face, and you find yourself sharing with anyone, even strangers, who will listen. The more exciting, the more amazing the news, the greater the eagerness to share. The gospel is the greatest news on earth. If we feel reluctant or embarrassed to share it, perhaps we have not really understood what Jesus has done for us. The more time we spend with Jesus the more infectious we become. We are his witnesses today. These shepherds searched for Jesus and the shepherds shared the good news of Jesus' birth.

Maybe you feel rather ordinary yourself today. Behind the festivities, maybe you secretly feel rather self-conscious, insecure, unsure how you would respond to such a visitation from angels. Then remember God delights in the ordinary and he brings his guiding love and forgiveness to all people of the world. You are loved!

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