

The Story Without Parallel...

"AND it came to pass that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

"And there were in the same country shepherds watching and keeping the night-watches over their flock. And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear. And the angels said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people, for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

"Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will.

"And it came to pass after the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. And seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child.

"And all that heard wondered; and at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them ... (Lk., 2:6-20).

"When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of King Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying: Where is he that is born king of the Jews?

For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him... and, behold, the star which they had seen in the east went before them until it came and stood over where the child was.

"And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And entering into the house they found the child with Mary his mother. And, falling down, they adored him. And opening their treasures, they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh ..." (*Matt.*, 2:1, 9-11).

...And its Message

"This day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord!... The King of peace... exalted over all the kings of the whole earth... Know that the kingdom of God is at hand; I tell you the solemn truth: There will be no more delay... Lift up your heads! Look, your redemption is at hand!

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth among men of good will... A child is born to us this day, and He shall be called God, the Mighty..." (*Nat. of our Lord, Rom. Brev.*).