

Reading:

Luke 2: 8-20

**In that region there were shepherds living in the fields,
keeping watch over their flock by night.**

**Then an angel of the Lord stood before them,
and the glory of the Lord shone around them,
and they were terrified.**

**But the angel of the Lord said to them,
“Do not be afraid; for see-
I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is the Messiah, the Lord.
This will be a sign for you:
you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.**

**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,
praising God and saying,
“Glory to god in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”**

**When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,
the shepherds said to one another,
‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place which the Lord has
made known to us.
So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph,
and the child lying in the manger.**

**When they saw this, they made known what had been told them
About this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them**

**but Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.
The shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen,
as it had been told to them.**

Meditation:

**Last Saturday Pilgrimage to the Manger happened once again...
Perhaps you were there...or have participated in years past...
and if you have had the experience...you know what
a truly a special event it is!
Even my grown up children tell me it helps to make the Christmas stories real...**

**And I think that is soooo very important:
the stories we read,
the truths they are convey...
are real even if they are not necessarily historically or scientifically true.**

**I once heard a Native American wise man begin the telling of the stories
of his tradition with:
“I don’t know if it happened exactly this way or not,
but I know that it is true.”**

**In my own experience when I was studying Scripture I was told:
“Everything in the Bible is true, and some of it really happened!”**

**I bring this all up, because a lot of people today,
have begun to discount these ancient stories because
because they seem so far fetched and unbelievable.
Folks disregard them because they know they can't possibly
be scientifically or historically accurate...
so why bother with them???**

In regards to our story today...

**We could demand to know if a multitude of heavenly hosts
really did appeared to a band of shepherds on a hillside on December 25
thousands of years ago....**

or was Jesus really lying in a manger?

**or was he as plump and blond as a newborn as we often see on
our Christmas cards and religious art??**

We could ask those type of superficial questions....

or we could ask FAR more important questions:

such as:

Who or what gives you hope?

Who or what brings light into your darkness?