

6th Day Octave of Christmas December 30, 2017 St. Agnes Church

We continue to move through these days after Christmas.

In the gospel readings, we hear of people who recognize and appreciate God's activity in the birth of Jesus Christ.

They give witness by their words: what they have waited for has come to pass.

A savior is born. The redemption of the world is at hand...within their grasp.

And this savior is right here in their midst...in their time.

They see with their own eyes what is taking place.

The shepherds, the wise Magi, Simeon, and now Anna.

After overcoming their initial awe, they welcome the savior.

And they are elated, filled with joy.

So much so, they could not remain silent. Their hearts are deeply moved.

Their minds begin pondering the meaning of what they see not just for themselves, but for the world.

They express themselves, giving voice to the fulfillment of their expectation.

They bow down in prayer; they praise God.

They share this good news with everyone they encounter, with anyone who will listen.

I imagine...during this experience of recognition, all else faded to the background.

Any problems they might have been having at the moment, any anguish or suffering or difficulties

paled in comparison and lost all significance. Nothing else mattered.

The world around them stopped, at least for a moment.

It was an experience of being at one with their Creator.

I wonder what happened to those shepherds.

What happened to the Magi? What happened to Simeon and Anna?

What did they choose to commit themselves to after their encounter?

How did their lives change...their understanding of the world and their place in it?

How did they attach themselves to this savior?

Surely they didn't forget. How could they forget?

I imagine as they started to recollect, to reflect on their divine encounter,

they were re-convinced about God's care for the world: it was not lost after all.

They found new assurance that God is trustworthy, faithful in keeping His promises.

I imagine new hopes were born, hopes about the goodness of the future...

the "what will happen now?" question. They knew: life in the world would never be the same.

Christmas is a time of divine encounter, for you and me; for God's people.

Today's prayer: "O Lord, as we hear the retelling of the birth of Your Son, enlighten us about Your loving concern for our world. Increase within us a desire to know You and to love You, for you are the God who created us and saves us. Amen!"