



# BEFORE MEAL CHRISTMAS GRACE

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS

<sup>2</sup> In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. <sup>2</sup> This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup> to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup> And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

## THE SHEPHERDS AND THE ANGELS

<sup>8</sup> And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; <sup>11</sup> for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there

was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## GRACE BEFORE CHRISTMAS DINNER

Heavenly Father, on this holy night, as we gather to celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, we give you thanks for the good news of great joy proclaimed to the shepherds. Bless this meal and our time together, and may the peace sung by the angels fill our hearts and homes. Like Mary, help us to ponder your love and grace in our hearts and share it with the world. Glory to you in the highest, now and forever. Amen.