The Fourth Reading

*St Luke tells how the angel of the Lord appears to shepherds tending their flocks in the fields. And the shepherds go to Bethlehem and find the baby lying in the manger.*

In the countryside close by

there were shepherds who lived in the fields

and took it in turns to watch their flocks during the night.

The angel of the Lord appeared to them

and the glory of the Lord shone round them.

They were terrified,

but the angel said, 'Do not be afraid.

Listen, I bring you news of great joy,

a joy to be shared by the whole people.

Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you;

he is Christ the Lord.

And here is a sign for you:

you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes

and lying in a manger.'

And suddenly with the angel there was a great throng of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and peace to men who enjoy his favour.'

Now when the angels had gone from them into heaven,

the shepherds said to one another,

'Let us go to Bethlehem

and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us'. So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph,

and the baby lying in the manger.

When they saw the child,

they repeated what they had been told about him,

and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God

for all they had heard and seen;

it was exactly as they had been told.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Luke 2:8-20 JB