

a. christmas prayer

*We, like the shepherds in the field, like the woman at the tomb, are
astonished, trembling in wonder and in fear.*

An article by Mark Galli, writer for Christianity Today

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When family and friends gather at our home for Christmas or Thanksgiving, I compose a prayer for the occasion. It usually coincides with themes that are engaging me at the moment. Here is what I plan to pray this Christmas day:

Almighty and Eternal God,

infinite and holy,

whose being genius cannot fathom,

whose works galaxies cannot contain,

Before you we gratefully come, celebrating the day

when you, the Almighty, did not count omnipotence a thing to be grasped,

when Eternity played by the calendar,

when Infinity was checked by gravity,
when Holiness mixed it up with sinners,
when the Creator of intergalactic space
became a body
and moved into our neighborhood.

Today we revel in the revelation

that we who were light-years distant
have been drawn to you as breath in lungs,
that we who had lost touch
can now feel the wounds in your hands and feet,
brushing up against the holy body that bore the sins of the world,
and the cold flesh that, soon enough, turned warm and whole,
and soon enough, made all things new.

We, like the shepherds in the field,

like the woman at the tomb,
are astonished,
trembling in wonder
and in fear.

If all this is true,

if a love like this
is the blood that courses through all reality,

behold, all things are new.

On our better days, Lord, we long to be transformed
by the wonder.

But most days, it scares us to death to be changed,
even by love.

But it is not to the bold that you have come,
Only to the trembling
And not to the wise,
But only to the foolish.

Give us ears to hear the glad tidings of great joy,
and lungs to sing with exuberant praise,
and legs to dance spritely around the strawy trough
that cradled the Love
who redeems the cosmos.

Amen.