



NATIVITY OF THE LORD, CYCLE B

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The Light of Christ: "The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world." Jn 1:9

The light of Christ coming into the world and celebrated this Christmas day, the Nativity of the Lord, prepares us through our baptism for God's purpose for us. When the Light of Christ, often called the "*Uncreated Light*" infuses our being we are sent on a spiritual journey toward "*deification*." The miracle of this journey is only possible because we are created in the image of God, "*Imago Dei*:"

"The Word became flesh to make us "partakers of the divine nature. For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine Sonship, might become a son of God.

"For the Son of God became man so that we might become God." (St. Athanasius)

"The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods." Ccc 460

The great gift of Jesus Christ emptying himself to be born of a virgin, celebrated this day, gives us the grace to realize his true existence in the measure in which we are raised up toward God and united with Him. Its basis is found in the Second Letter of Peter (1:4):
"Christ Jesus has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through Christ you may come to share in His divine nature..."

Indeed mystical union with God, beyond mind and reason in a new age when creatures will no longer know corruption, is the peak moment of our Christian yearning. "*Deification is a state of direct illumination appearing in those worthy as something exceeding their comprehension.*" – *Saint Maximus the Confessor*. Deification is illumination within "*Uncreated Light*."

Today we take the time to reflect and pray. Almighty God, as we are bathed in the *Uncreated Light* of your incarnate Word, may the light of faith illumine our minds and shine through our deeds.

*The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice;
Let the many isles be glad.
Be glad in the Lord and give thanks to his holy name." Ps 97*

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.
What came to be through him was life,
and this life was the light of the human race;
the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

A man named John was sent from God.
He came for testimony, to testify to the light,
so that all might believe through him.
He was not the light,
but came to testify to the light.
The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world,
and the world came to be through him,
but the world did not know him.
He came to what was his own,
but his own people did not accept him.

But to those who did accept him
he gave power to become children of God,
to those who believe in his name,
who were born not by natural generation
nor by human choice nor by a man's decision
but of God.

And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.

John testified to him and cried out, saying,
*"This was he of whom I said,
'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me
because he existed before me.'"*

From his fullness we have all received,
grace in place of grace,
because while the law was given through Moses,
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
No one has ever seen God.
The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side,
has revealed him.

The Gospel of the Lord