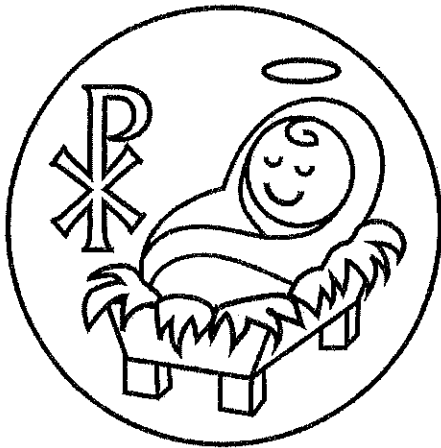
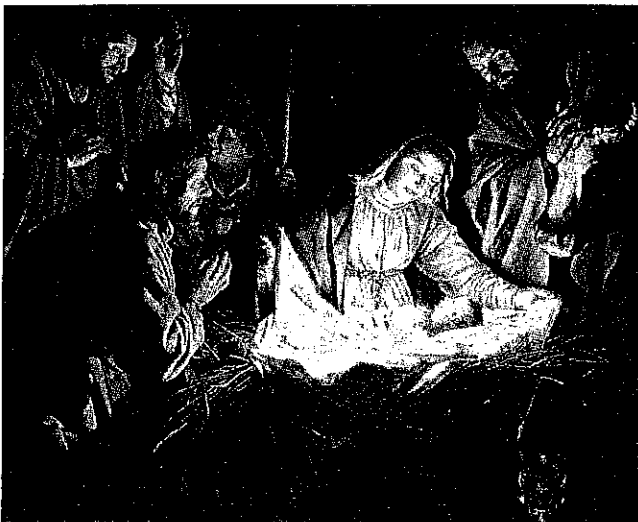


December 24: The Birth of Christ on Christmas Day



Jesus Christ was born on the first Christmas day. He is the Messiah or Savior foretold by the prophets. Jesus was born in a cave where animals lived because when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem for a census there was no room for them to stay at the inn. Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. After the angels appeared to the shepherds tending their flocks, the shepherds came to see Jesus. They praised and glorified God and told many people the Messiah had

been born. Also the wise men from the east, who had followed the special star, were so happy to find Jesus with his mother Mary that "they fell down and worshipped him". Then they gave Jesus treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Mary kept all these things in her heart and pondered all that had happened.



"Adoration of the Shepherds"
Gerard von Honthorst, 1622



Luke 2:6-7, 13-20. ⁶ While they were there, the day had come for her to give birth. ⁷ She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for them in the inn. . . .

¹³ Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." ¹⁵ When the angels

went away from them into the sky, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem, now, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."

¹⁶ They came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby was lying in the feeding trough. ¹⁷ When they saw it, they publicized widely the saying which was spoken to them about this child. ¹⁸ All who heard it wondered at the things which were spoken to them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, just as it was told them.

Matthew 2:7-12. ⁷ Then Herod secretly called the wise men. . . ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem. . . ⁹ They, having heard the king, went their way; and behold, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹ They came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Being warned in a dream that they shouldn't return to Herod, they went back to their own country another way.