

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate  
 Holy Coptic Orthodox Church  
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 Chicago



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“... the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard”

(Luke 2:20)



**I**n the temple, morning and evening, an unblemished lamb was offered as a sacrifice to God. To ensure that the supply of a perfect offering was available, the Temple authorities had their own private sheep flocks pastured near Bethlehem.

It is most likely that the shepherds to whom heaven announced the coming of the Savior were those who were in charge of the flocks from which the temple offerings were chosen. These simple men of the fields were the first to receive the Heaven's announcement of His wonderful birth.

When the Angels have left them and gone away to heaven, the shepherd's hurried on

to Bethlehem where they found Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus lying in a manger.

After visiting Bethlehem, after seeing the Divine Child and offering Him worship, after telling people the amazing things they had heard about the child, after all this and with Christ in their hearts, the shepherds went back to their fields to restart their daily work ... But they returned from that first Christmas with something new; hearts full of joy and praise to God for what they have seen and for the good news they have heard: “Unto you is born ... a Savior who is Christ the Lord” ... How lucky they were! They have encountered Christ the Lord!

### An Insight

After they had encountered Christ “... the shepherds returned (back to work) glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard” (Luke 2:20) How about you? Have you encountered Christ this Christmas? And as you went back to your daily routine, whether at home or at work, what have you gained from Christmas? Do you feel the presence of Christ the Savior in your heart and can you be a witness of him to others? Have you, as the shepherds had, felt the joy of having a Savior born to you? ... Do you glorify God for this inexpressible gift? Hopefully you do, for this is the true essence of celebrating Christmas.

### A Papal Visit

H.H. Pope Shenouda III's visit to the U.S. and Canada lasted from January 15th to February 6th. During that time H.H. visited New York, New Jersey, Detroit, Cleveland, Boston, Los Angeles and Toronto. His Holiness also held clergy meetings for the East Coast and the Midwest in the U. S. A. and the East Coast of Canada.

It was a time of Joy and spiritual growth for us all.

