



## Advent Reflection for Friday, December 16th

For the podcast click [here](#) to listen.

Luke 2: 8-12

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah,\* the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

---

Reflection by Dennis Labbanicz:

When I hear this passage the first thing that stands out to me is how crazy it must've been to be the shepherds in the field – imagine that feeling that they would be experiencing. The passage says it in the bluntest of terms – they were terrified. And how could they not be – AN ANGEL, a messenger of God came from out of nowhere and appeared to them in the middle of the night. But with this terror came the best news possible – something that they almost definitely weren't comprehending the magnitude of in that moment. A child was born, the son of God right there down the path from their field.

For my life, this passage hits home as I can understand a bit what the shepherds are going through. For most of my adolescence I found myself called to be an active member of a church community. But when I reached my late 20s about a decade ago that feeling completely went away. Since then, the world, and life has seemed to get harder for everyone, but never have I been drawn back to a life of faith. Earlier this year I had a son, Charlie, and through him I now have found myself called back to a life of faith. Is he the son of God? Of course not, and I feel silly saying that out loud a little bit. But I do believe God has used him as a messenger to bring me back into the fold.

Just a few weeks ago he was baptized at Holy Apostles, a truly special day that I won't ever forget. If you had asked me a few months ago, would I ever baptize him the answer was probably not, but like those shepherds a message was sent to me. Out of nowhere I have been called by him, to a church (and

religious organization) I had never stepped foot in into until this summer. And now I am sitting here doing an advent reflection – God really works in amazing ways. I leave you with this, Merry Christmas to all of you and your families and have a happy holiday season.

---

Dennis Labbanz is a retail professional who works for west elm in strategic planning and operations. He lives in South Slope with his wife Casey, daughter Eleanor, son Charlie and dog Bones. He loves history, beer and watching sports - especially his beloved New York Mets.

