

The Anglican Province of Christ the King

St. George's Anglican Pro-Cathedral

1210 Dixie Trail

Raleigh, NC 27614

(919) 786-0640



Archiepiscopal Residence:

10317 Crisp Drive

Raleigh, NC 27614

APCKArchbishopJEU@hotmail.com

Christmas 2020

“ET VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST ET HABITAVIT IN NOBIS”

To all the Clergy and Faithful Members of the Anglican Province of Christ the King:

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ as we celebrate the great mystery of His Incarnation and His Birth among us as the Babe of Bethlehem!

The year 2020 and the COVID virus brought with it many challenges to our society ~ wide-scale panic, political and social unrest, hoarding, financial difficulties, medical crises, and, with them all, the ultimate ~ death. Were we not Children of the Light and followers of Jesus Christ, it would be easy to become seriously depressed and fall into a state of mindless despair. In many ways this year has not been tremendously different from the year in which Our Lord was born. There was violence, chaos, and unrest all around. In a word, there was gross darkness (Isaiah) everywhere; both within and without. But then, God took human flesh and became Incarnate of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Jesus stepped into the darkness of our human history as the One who brings light and peace. I am reminded of the words of the Prologue of St. John's Gospel, read as the Last Gospel at the Christmas Eve Mass, *“In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.”* (St. John 1:4-5 and 14.)

We recognize the word “comprehend” to mean “to understand something.” The more formal meaning is “to include, comprise, or encompass.” Darkness can't include or be comprised of light, for then it would cease being dark. Neither can darkness encompass light, for even one lit candle in a sea of darkness can be seen even a great distance away. Light always vanquishes darkness! This is what happened when Emmanuel ~ God With Us, came into our history. Light, the Light was brought into our world and we are led to Him as were the Magi.

Last Monday evening, December 21st, 2020, on the Winter Solstice, the day that marks the shortest amount of daylight and the greatest amount of darkness of the year, we received a great Light and a great gift. For out of the darkness, in the south-western sky, we observed what astronomers call a conjunction or the appearance, in this case, of Jupiter and Saturn combining into one great Star, which hadn't been observed since 1226 and won't happen again until 2080!

The light of that “Christmas Star” reminded me that no matter how bad things may seem in this age, even with COVID, Jesus is still the Light of the World and He still brings peace, hope, and joy to this weary world and to those who watch and wait for Him. It is my hope that during this Christmastide, all of you will come to experience all that Jesus has to offer those He loves through the mystery of His Incarnation; both at Christmas and on into a Blessed New Year filled with His Presence in your heart. Remember, try as they might, no President, Governor, or politician can *ever* cancel Christmas for –

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONGST US.

For the Love of God and the Sake of the Gospel,

✠ The Most Rev. Dr. John E. Upham, Jr.
Archbishop
Anglican Province of Christ the King

