

*A note from St. James' Pastoral Care
December 2022, Christmas/Epiphany*



Dear Friend,

Happy Christmas! With Marg Casebow's permission, I'm sharing the drawing she created for her own Christmas Cards this year:



Marg was telling me, a few Sunday mornings ago, how she believes she was "told" to make this card the way she did and - filled with curiosity - I asked to see it. When I did, I suddenly felt that it was the PERFECT gift to share with each of you! As we deal with illness of various kinds or getting older or isolation - or all three! - we can sometimes end up feeling as if we have no use - no value - left. I believe the message of this card for each of us is that, as long as we're here, God still has a special purpose for each of us, even if it's not as active a one as it might once have been. So, ask God, "If you can still use me - as You can this dilapidated angel - please, Lord, show me how?" You might be surprised by His answer!



Now, here are some Gospels to carry you through Christmas into the Epiphany Season:

Dec. 25 (Christmas Day)

John 1: 1-14

**Jan. 1 (Naming of Jesus)
(or Epiphany)**

Luke 2: 15-21

Matthew 2: 1-12

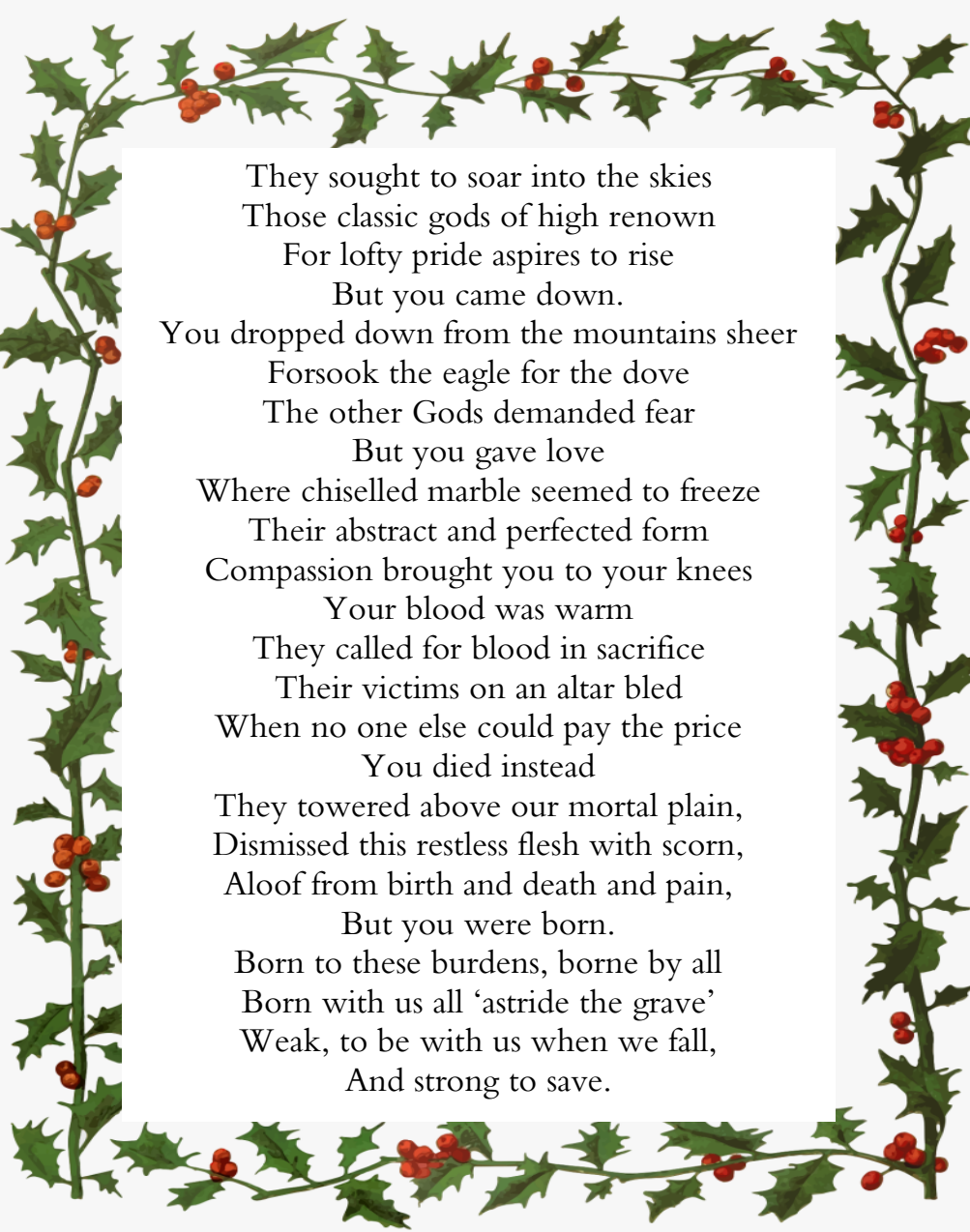
Jan. 8 (Baptism of Jesus)

Matthew 3: 13-17

Jan. 15

John 1: 29-42

I'm sharing another Malcolm Guite (Anglican priest and poet) poem with you, one in which he contrasts the various gods of the Classical world with the astonishing revelation of God's love for us, shown in the manger at Bethlehem. It's called "Descent":



They sought to soar into the skies
 Those classic gods of high renown
 For lofty pride aspires to rise
 But you came down.
 You dropped down from the mountains sheer
 Forsook the eagle for the dove
 The other Gods demanded fear
 But you gave love
 Where chiselled marble seemed to freeze
 Their abstract and perfected form
 Compassion brought you to your knees
 Your blood was warm
 They called for blood in sacrifice
 Their victims on an altar bled
 When no one else could pay the price
 You died instead
 They towered above our mortal plain,
 Dismissed this restless flesh with scorn,
 Aloof from birth and death and pain,
 But you were born.
 Born to these burdens, borne by all
 Born with us all 'astride the grave'
 Weak, to be with us when we fall,
 And strong to save.

As we end this year of 2022, here's an old Anglican prayer with which to begin the New Year:

O Immortal Lord God, who inhabitest eternity,
 and hast brought thy servants to the begin-
 ning of another year: Pardon, we humbly be-
 seech thee, our transgressions in the past,
 bless to us this New Year, and graciously abide
 with us all the days of our life; through Jesus
 Christ our Lord. Amen.



May 2023 be a good year for us all!
 (M.C.)

With Love and Prayers
 from your St. James' Parish Family



ST. JAMES' ANGLICAN CHURCH
 58 Peter St. North (corner of Peter and Coldwater)
 Orillia, Ontario L3V 6J6 705-325-2742
 office@stjamesorillia.com
<http://www.stjamesorillia.com>

