Christmas Eve Scripture Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7 (translated by Rev. Dr. Wilda Gafney)

The people who walked bleakness have seen a great light;
those who lived in the land of the shadow of death, on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation, you have magnified its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden, and the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called:
A Wonder, a Counselor, a Mighty God,
Perpetual Parent, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be peace without end for the throne of David and his monarchy.
God will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of God, COMMANDER of heaven's vanguard, will do this.

Second Reading: Luke 2:1-14 (translated by Rev. Dr. Wilda Gafney)

Now it happened in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered (for taxation). This was the first registration and occurred while Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be registered; each to their own towns. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, for he was from the house and heritage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was betrothed and who was pregnant. So it was, that, while they were there, the time came for her to birth her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and swaddled him, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Shepherds were in that region there staying in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Most High God came upon them, and the glory of the Living God shone around them, and they were greatly terrified. But the angel said to them, "Fear not. Look! For I proclaim to you good news of great joy for all the people: For there is born to you this day a Savior who is the Messiah, the Sovereign God, in the city of David. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby swaddled and lying in a manger."

And immediately there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly array, praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among peoples whom God favors!"

Third Reading: Luke 2:15-20 (translated by Rev. Dr. Wilda Gafney)

When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go

now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to be, which the Sovereign God has made known to us."

So they came hurrying and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Now seeing this, they made known what had been spoken to them about this child. " And all who heard marveled at what was spoken by the shepherds to them. But Mary preserved all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen: it was just as it had been told to them.

Fourth Reading: John 1:1-5,9,14 (translated by Rev. Dr. Wilda Gafney)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word not one thing came into being that came into being. What has come into being in the Word was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the bleakness, and the bleakness did not overtake it.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,
glory as of a parent's only child, full of grace and truth.