



Dear GCS students, staff, faculty, alumni, donors and board members,

What a joy it is for me to send you Christmas greetings. I look forward to it each year.

It has been a privilege for me to serve in such a Christ-honoring community of faith. This season gives us all an opportunity to celebrate together the gracious miracle of God himself coming down to us in and through the Eternal Son to raise us up to become his redeemed children.

One of the greatest blessings of serving in a seminary such as GCS is that the core of our work is to celebrate all year, Immanuel, God with us, in each and every one of our courses in a myriad of ways—whether we are considering the history of the church, the Greek of the New Testament, the doctrine of the Trinity, the practice of youth ministry, the teachings of the Old Testament or the texts of the Gospels.

At this time each year I am faced with the challenge of expressing in words what exceeds all human words; the glory of incarnation of the Word of God. But I am often rescued from this daunting but worthy task by happily recalling the words of others who have already beautifully done so. So, this Christmas season let me share with you a gift I have often enjoyed, written by poet Luci Shaw.

### **Mary's song**

Blue homespun and the bend of my breast  
keep warm this small hot naked star  
fallen to my arms. (Rest . . .  
you who have had so far  
to come.) Now nearness satisfies  
The body of God sweetly. Quiet he lies  
Whose vigor hurled  
a universe. He sleeps  
whose eyelids have not closed before.  
His breath (so slight it seems  
no breath at all) once ruffled the dark deeps  
to sprout a world.  
Charmed by doves' voices, the whisper of straw,  
he dreams,  
hearing no music from his other spheres.  
Breath, mouth, ears, eyes

He is curtailed  
who overflowed all skies,  
all years.  
Older than eternity, now he  
is new. Now native to earth as I am, nailed  
to my poor planet, caught that I might be free,  
blind in my womb to know my darkness ended,  
brought to this birth  
for me to be new-born,  
and for him to see me mended  
I must see him torn.

Luci Shaw  
*A Widening Light: Poems of the Incarnation*

Every blessing in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Deddo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Deddo  
President  
Grace Communion Seminary

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