



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

Donations are appreciated to support international and pastoral scholarships. Please give as you are able to Grace Communion Seminary by mail to PO Box 875, Glendora, CA 91740 or donate online at gcs.edu/donate.