

Christmas Reflection

About 2000 years ago, there was born in Palestine, a Jew who changed profoundly the course of human evolution.

Mary's childbirth is a celebration orchestrated by God. Along with the gentiles from the East are invited the shepherds, the dispossessed and despised, lowest rung of Jewish society. When the shepherds relate what the Lord had made known to them about her newborn, Mary treasures all these things and ponders them in her heart (Lk 2:15-19). And when the wise men later visit her home, worship the child in her arms, offering gifts fit for a king (Mt 2:11) what I wonder was running through the head of this humble carpenter's wife. Was it awe? Fear? Confusion? Again when she meets the prophets Simeon and Anna (Lk 2:25-38) she is left wondering at their prophecy which she fails to understand even when she sees the first signs of the "light of revelation for the Gentiles and glory for God's people Israel" (Lk 2:32) as her 12-year old teaches the elders in the temple (Lk 2:46-50).

Despite this Mary's belief in the promises of God never falters. She questions, reflects and waits patiently for God's plan to unfold trusting in God's wisdom.

This Christmas let us spend some time pondering the birth of Jesus, not in our heads, but as Mary did, in our hearts. Let us reflect on the significance of God's gift to us in the child born that day of a simple, village woman, in an obscure stable in a little town named Bethlehem. In our multi-religious and multi-cultural society let us dwell on the message implied in the presence of the religious and social "outsiders" at the birth of our Saviour. Amidst the plenty that we enjoy let us be inspired by Mary's Magnificat that proclaims the "greatness of our God" who "fills the starving with good things". Finally, let us contemplate our role as Wisdom-bearers in the birthing of the Word of God into our greedy, corrupt and selfish world, that we may find a place among Jesus' "Blessed....who hear the word of God and keep it" (Lk 11:28).

Christmas



A Christmas Blessing

May there be harmony in all your relationships.
May sharp words, envious thoughts, and hostile feelings be dissolved.
May you give and receive love generously.
May this love echo in your heart like the joy of church bells on a clear December day.
May each person who comes into your life be greeted as another Christ.

May the honour given the Babe of Bethlehem be that which you extend to every guest who enters your presence.
May the hope of this sacred season settle in your soul.
May it be a foundation of courage for you when times of distress occupy your inner land.

May the wonder and awe that fills the eyes of children be awakened within you.
May it lead you to renewed awareness and appreciation of whatever you too easily take for granted.
May the bonds of love for one another be strengthened as you gather with your family and friends around the table of festivity and nourishment.

May you daily open the gift of your life and be grateful for the hidden treasures it contains.
The coming year be one of good health for you.
May you have energy and vitality.

May you care well for your body, mind, and spirit.
May you keep your eye on the Star within you and trust this Luminescent Presence to guide and direct you each day.
May you go often to the Bethlehem of your heart and visit the One who offers you peace. May you bring this peace into our world.

(Joyce Rupp)

Mary,
Living from that sacred place
Where earth meets heaven,
Your heart discerned the Holy One
In stars, in sun,
In lives of men and women,
In wind, in rock, in miracles of heaven
In sacred Word proclaiming Israel's story,
In all the dailiness of life.

As we celebrate this great feast of Christmas, may we be drawn more deeply into the heart of our Wisdom God's love so that we become people of deeper faith, hope and love like Mary and our ancestors before us.

May you experience the love, joy and promise of the miracle of Christmas in your life.

Jean,

Director Unanima International

