

Daily Reflections



NO ROOM AT THE INN

By Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

Centering

Merry Christmas! As you begin this Christmas reflection, I invite you to center yourself by listening to the song “**No Room for the King**” by Eric & Sharon’s Christian Music. Take time and sit with the words of the song for a few moments. Below are excerpts:

Verse 2

*In Bethlehem’s streets, a Savior lay unseen
No room in the inns for the promised King
The busy world rushed on, no time or space
They missed the gift of Heaven’s perfect grace.*

Chorus

*No room for the King, the One who brings the light
He came to save, to make all things right
Oh, will we turn away, or will we sing
“Come into my heart, there’s room for the King.”*

Verse 3

Now in our lives, we fill every part
But are we making room for Him in our hearts?
With all our desires, pursuits, and plans
Do we leave a place for God's perfect Lamb?

Tonight, as stars in heaven gleam
Remember Bethlehem and the unexpected King
This time, may our hearts with love ignite
To welcome the Savior, our guiding light.

EXCERPTS FROM "NO ROOM FOR THE KING" BY SHARON OF ERIC & SHARON'S
CHRISTIAN MUSIC

From Today's Readings

*"The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
a light has shone.
For the yoke that burdened them,
the pole on their shoulder,
and the rod of their taskmaster
you have smashed, as on the day of Midian.
For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
upon his shoulder dominion rests.
They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero,
Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.
His dominion is vast
and forever peaceful..."*

ISAIAH 9:1, 3, 5-6

*"Beloved:
The grace of God has appeared, saving all
and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires
and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age,
as we await the blessed hope,
the appearance of the glory of our great God
and savior Jesus Christ,
who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness
and to cleanse for himself a people as his own,
eager to do what is good."*

"In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. ... And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.

The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear.

The angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.

And this will be a sign for you:

you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

LUKE 2:1; 4-14

Reflection

During the 23 years I cared for my parents, my dad was a “frequent flyer.” He was admitted into the hospital at least once or twice a year, for six weeks at a time. There were four consecutive years when my mother and I spent the Christmas holidays in the hospital with him.

One of those times, just two days before Christmas, we stayed in the emergency room for almost two days waiting for a room to become available for my dad. Finally, as

Christmas day dawned, he was transferred to a patient room. Now, I used to bring my mom along when we took Dad to the hospital. My dad was almost blind, so I needed to be there to advocate for him. I needed to bring Mom with me because she could not be at home by herself because she was deaf. We practically lived in the hospital.

That Christmas, when we spent two days in the triage room waiting for a regular patient room, I alternated being with Dad in the emergency room and with Mom in the emergency reception room. For those two days, Mom and I ate only food from the vending machine. That Christmas Eve, I really felt and identified with Mary, Jesus, and Joseph's experience of "no room at the inn."

When people at church learned we were in the hospital, they started bringing food. One person brought a plate of ham for me and Mom. The nurses gave us "caregiver trays." My cousins brought us food and spent the day with us. Members of the Filipino ministry brought us a share from their Christmas meals and other treats. Our parish priest brought the Holy Eucharist.

This was my experience of the shepherds visiting the Holy Family and the three Kings bearing gifts. This experience made me realize that Christmas is Christmas. There were no Christmas trees, no Christmas lights, no tinsel, no Christmas gifts in the hospital. Christmas that year was void of frills, gifts, fancy clothes, and even delicious meals. Geography, ambiance, setting, and fashion were not important.

Love comes through even in the direst of situations. God's love, which has been with us since the beginning of time, does not wait for us to be prepared or to take notice. God does not wait for us to put up the Christmas tree, to hang the lights, to decorate our houses. God's love just comes. God's love just pours out. God's love just shines through, piercing the clouds in our lives. God just loves us and comes to us. God's love makes its way, beyond all reason, no matter what. God's love -- redemption, selflessness, unconditional love, boundless love -- that is Christmas, that is the gift.

What is essential is for us to take notice, to pay attention, to be awake to acknowledge God's manifestation to us. The important thing is for us to be ready to act on that love. Make room for LOVE.

I am acquainted with infirmities, I'm familiar with afflictions. With God's grace, I have set my eyes on the Holy One. I have opened my doors to the Merciful One, and left the doors wide open, allowing the Holy to enter in and embrace and love me.

This is what we ought to realize. The message was made clear by the wisdom of the star. The point is to have Christmas always in our hearts.



Image created by Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

For Pondering

- Where in your own “inn” (your heart, your schedule, your priorities) might there be “no room” for the unexpected arrival of the Savior?
- Jesus was born in humble circumstances, a manger. What does this reveal about where God chooses to appear, and where might you find the Divine in the seemingly unimportant or overlooked places in your own world?

For Prayer

Wonder-Counselor,

God-Hero,

Father-Forever,

Prince of Peace.

*We praise and thank you
for coming and living with us.*

Shine your light upon us.

*Help us make room in our hearts
for you, our Promised King.*

*Teach us to open our hands and hearts to you,
O Prince of Peace.*

And may we share the love we received, O Emmanuel.

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