

## **LUKE 2:1-14**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'

**(Christmas Eve)**

**A DREAM COME TRUE**

**Luke 2:1-14**

As I ponder what this night means for our world which always seems to teeter on the edge of a multitude of crises and disasters, more this year than in decades! I wonder why God would take such an intense interest in the people who inhabit our tiny blue speck whirling around in a solar system which is itself a tiny pencil dot in a galaxy containing a hundred billion

stars and which is a distant neighbor to a hundred billion other galaxies in a universe whose boundaries can only be mathematically calculated. And what possible interest could the God who created all this have in we fragile little beings who live and die in the blink of eternity's eye?

What happened in Bethlehem 2000 years ago whispers answers to questions such as these. Whether or not we accept the answers is entirely a matter of faith and if we are not open to considering them, why would we bother to ask them? Isn't this, at least in part, why we are here this evening? We can only think through these questions with our human brains and our only frame of reference for answering them can be our human experience. But God is God; so, God know this and has revealed Itself to us in human terms so that we can understand it.

Any artist, any author, any performer, any inventor—anyone who creates something out of nothing will tell you that their work becomes a living expression and extension of themselves. And while their intent will always be reflected in their creation, it assumes a life of its own in the public domain and then becomes open to the consumer's interpretation. As the creator, you do not control that. But as a creator, what you hope is that the passion behind your product or your performance becomes a source of inspiration, and of learning, and opens doors for others to grow in their consciousness thereby helping to advance the evolution of the entire species.

My theological imagination tells me something like that happened on Christmas Eve. Nothing is created without first being dreamed and so it is impossible for the universe, let alone our very own selves, to exist without the intent of a Power behind it which is vaster than anything we can possibly conceive. God dreamed us before we came into being.

And this is where Christmas Eve gets interesting. The highest nature of humanity as revealed throughout the life of the baby who was born is love. No spiritually oriented person would dispute that. Every religion, every prophet, every mystic in the history of humanity agrees that the principle force of the universe is love. *For God so loved the world...* And so love is the First Cause. It was in love we were first dreamed and out of love we were created.

Christmas Eve is therefore part of a much larger picture in which our portraits are

painted. We occupy a place in the grandeur of Creation. But as we noted with any artistic work, the finished product acquires a life of its own and then attains its own power to create. We all have the ability and the free will to dream and then to create.

This means two things on Christmas Eve. First, we are invited to be inspired to live in love as our Creator intended and for which Jesus was sent as an example for us and whose teachings are there for us to implement in our lives. The passion with which Christ lived reflects the passion of God for us.

And second, we are encouraged to live out of our own passions and to translate those into actions that give expression to our creative powers. And in this manner, we are now forces of positive energy who can dream and then contribute to the world in an infinite variety of ways. Being good at anything and giving full expression to who we are sends pulses of love out into the universe. And where there is love, there will be life and there will be joy!

Merry Christmas, everyone!

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