



Of Seeds and Flowers



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William R. Pfeiffer – Director

Mary's Field, Ltd. - PO Box 99 - Hebron, CT 06248 - 860.530.1253 - wisdom@marysfield.org

It began with the simple cry of a baby.

"Each one of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus."

The wonder of Christmas is that the God who dwelt among us now can dwell within us. The fire inside us comes from the way God made us, namely, TO CRAVE THE INFINITE AND to keep everything else in its proper place.

"Lord, what made you so small?" St. Bernard of Clairvaux's ecstatic response was, ***"It was love!"***



Old Irish Blessing: *"May love and peace be the first to lift the latch on your door and the Christ Child be guided to your home by the light of your heart!"*



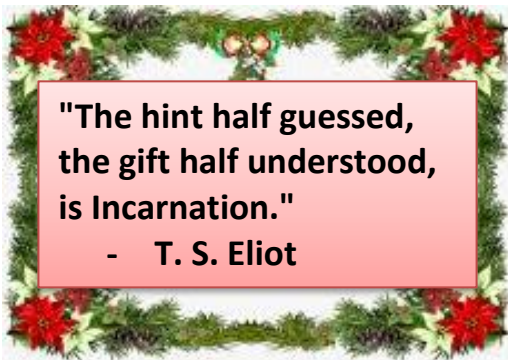
Irish Christmas Prayer: *"The love of God upon you, the peace of God within you. The grace of God beside you, the joy of God surround you!"*



A WOMAN DREAMED SHE WALKED INTO A BRAND-NEW SHOP IN THE MARKETPLACE AND, TO HER SURPRISE, FOUND GOD BEHIND THE COUNTER. *"WHAT DO YOU SELL HERE?"* SHE ASKED, *"EVERYTHING YOUR HEART DESIRES,"* SAID GOD.

HARDLY DARING TO BELIEVE WHAT SHE WAS HEARING, THE WOMAN DECIDED TO ASK FOR THE BEST THINGS A HUMAN BEING COULD WISH FOR. *"I WANT PEACE OF MIND AND LOVE AND HAPPINESS AND WISDOM AND FREEDOM FROM FEAR,"* SHE SAID. THEN AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT, SHE ADDED, *"NOT JUST FOR ME. FOR EVERYONE ON EARTH."*

GOD SMILED, *"I THINK: YOU'VE GOT ME WRONG, MY DEAR",* HE SAID. *"WE DON'T SELL FRUITS HERE. ONLY SEEDS."*



**"The hint half guessed,
the gift half understood,
is Incarnation."**

- T. S. Eliot



What reason induced them to worship a king so far away, and who was not yet grown up? Why do they set forth on so long a journey and offer gifts, when dangers are sure to beset their proceeding?"

- St John Chrysostom



An angel was walking down the street carrying a torch in one hand and a pail of water in the other. A woman asked the angel, "What are you going to do with the torch and with the pail?" The angel said, "With the torch, I'm going to burn down the mansions of heaven, and with the pail of water I'm going to put out the fires of hell. **Then we shall see who really loves God.**"

"The only blind person at Christmas is he who has not Christmas in his heart."

- Helen Keller

A DROP OF RAIN...A BIT OF SUN... A certain scientist devoted his life to developing a strain of butterfly that would be the most beautiful combination of colors ever seen on this planet. After years of experimentation, he was certain that he had a cocoon that would produce his genetic masterpiece. On the day that the butterfly was expected to emerge, he gathered together his entire staff. All waited breathlessly as the creature began to work its way out of the cocoon. It disengaged its right wing, its body, and most of its left wing. Just as the staff were ready to cheer and pass the champagne and cigars, they saw with horror that the extremity of the left wing of the butterfly was stuck in the mouth of the cocoon. The creature was desperately flapping its other wing to free itself. As it labored, it grew more and more exhausted. Each new effort seemed more difficult, and the intervals between efforts grew longer. At last the scientist, unable to bear the tension, took a scalpel and cut a tiny section from the mouth of the cocoon. With one final burst of strength, the butterfly fell free onto the laboratory table. Everybody cheered and reached for the cigars and the champagne. Then silence again descended on the room. Although the butterfly was free, it could not fly ...

The struggle to escape from the cocoon is nature's way of 'forcing blood to the extremities of a butterfly's wings so that when it emerges from the cocoon it can enjoy its new life and fly to its heart's content. In seeking to save the creature's life, the scientist had truncated its capacity to function. A butterfly that cannot fly is a contradiction in terms.

This is a mistake that God is not going to make with you and me. God does not intervene before the proper time in **our growth**. God is transforming us so that we will be purified of all of the junk, the obstacles to our real growth. When properly purified and prepared God's grace will flow. Stay committed to the spiritual journey, the practice of daily prayer and trust that God will give you the grace to persevere. "In His will is our peace." - Dante
TRANSFORMED PEOPLE, TRANSFORM PEOPLE!!

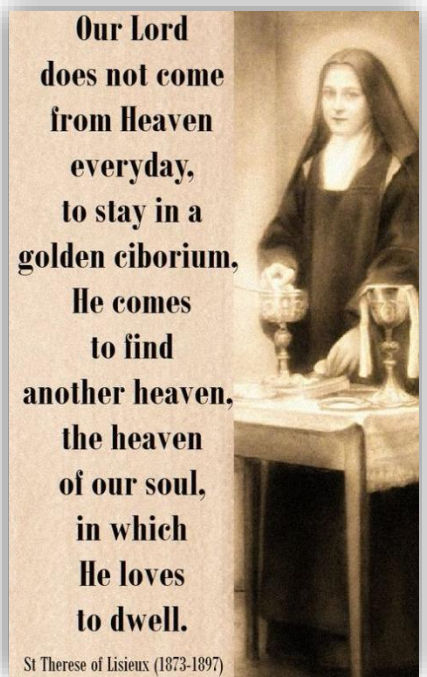


AN EASY BUT EFFECTIVE PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS IS: LISTEN, REALLY LISTEN CLOSELY TO THE WORDS OF THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS. REFLECT ON THE WORDS, LET THEM BECOME REAL, ALIVE IN YOUR HEART AND LEAD YOU TO A GOD RESPONSE.

'To His own He came yet His own did not accept Him. Any (ANY) who did accept Him He EMPOWERED to become CHILDREN OF GOD. John, 1: 12. Your DNA is God's DNA!!

Thinking is difficult, that is why most people judge.

Mary was a little older than 14 when the angel Gabriel appeared to her. - about a ninth grader!
Mary was about 64 years old when she died in Ephesus. - The visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL LOVE. WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL FOR ALL OF YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT (it has been a difficult year, financially) YOUR PRAYERS AND CARDS, YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT. I WANTED TO SEND EACH OF YOU A CHRISTMAS CARD THIS YEAR BUT LIFE HAS HAD ITS OWN WAY! SORRY!!

MERRY CHRISTMAS! Cindy and Bill



Jesus was an unplanned pregnancy! Mary was an unwed mother! She could have been stoned to death. It was a good thing that Planned Non-Parenthood of Nazareth was closed for the week. I wonder what the Planned Un-Parenthood counselors would have advised this young couple to do in their difficult circumstances?

On their way to Bethlehem I did overhear Joseph say to Mary about abortion, "We don't want to be one issue voters, Mary, and I think God will understand." Mary responded firmly, "Joseph, Joseph, don't you remember last Sabbath and what the

Rabbi said about abortion and one-issue voting. The Rabbi was very, VERY clear": All he said was: "Remember the Golden Calf!" -Only "one issue", he said, "but God and Moses were VERY angry."

Cognitive dissonance is how psychologists describe the anxiety generated when a person experience conflicts with their *model of the world*. To get rid of this anxiety you have to change the **facts to fit the model**, or the **model of the world has to give way to fit the facts**. Today, the model is so badly damaged that many, many people are suffering from Cognitive dissonance. We simply call it stress, anxiety, "TOO MUCH"!



Medjugorje

The validity of the 39 years of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin at Medjugorje have finally been accepted by the Vatican. Mary's appearances are true. Find what you can on line, and YouTube. It will keep you informed and touch your heart and soul and help you to understand the present and future. "The Triumph"- a documentary", on YouTube is worth watching. -a good start!



Nov. 25th Message: "Dear children! This is a time of love, warmth, prayer and joy. Pray, little children, for the tiny Jesus to be born in your hearts. Open your hearts to Jesus who gives Himself to each of you. God sent me to be the joy and hope in this time, and I say to you: Without the baby Jesus you do not have the tenderness or the feeling of Heaven which is hidden in the newborn Jesus. Therefore, little children, work on yourselves. By reading the Sacred Scripture you will discover Jesus' birth and joy, as in the early days of Medjugorje. Medjugorje gave this gift to humanity. History will show the truth, which truth, even today, is being repeated in you and around you. Work on and build peace through the Sacrament of Confession. Reconcile with God, little children, and you will see miracles around you. Thank you for having responded to my call."

"I was the first tabernacle. The Holy Body grew within me first." - Mary, to the Medjugorje Visionaries



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SPEAKING SOFTLY

Though He was in the form of God he did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at. Rather, He **EMPTIED HIMSELF AND TOOK THE FORM OF A SLAVE BEING BORN IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN.**" Philippians 2:6-7. And our response to His **EMPTYING** should be our emptying or **TOTAL SURRENDER!**

A PRAYER OF SURRENDER: Loving Father, I surrender to You today with all my heart and soul. Please come into my heart in a deeper way. I say "Yes," to You today. I open all the secret places of my heart to You and say, "Come on in." Jesus You are Lord of my whole life. I believe in You and receive You as my Lord and Savior. I hold nothing back. Holy Spirit, bring me to deeper conversion to the person of Jesus Christ. I surrender all to You: my health, my family, my resources, occupation, skills, relationships, time management, successes and failures. I release it, and let it go. I surrender my understanding of how things ought to be, my choices and my will. I surrender to You the promises I have kept and the promises I have

failed to keep. I surrender my weaknesses and strengths to You. I surrender my emotions, my fears, my insecurities, my sexuality. I especially surrender _____. (Continue to surrender other areas as the Holy Spirit reveals them to you.) Lord, I surrender my entire life to You, the past, the present and the future. In sickness and in health, in life and in death, I belong to You.

"Take, Lord, and receive, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You have given all to me. To You, O Lord, I return it. All is Yours. Dispose of it wholly according to Your will. Give me Your love and Your grace, for this is sufficient for me."

(Prayer of St. Ignatius)

The GREATEST teacher of all time was /is Jesus. He understood and understands the human heart PERFECTLY because He HAD one. He is my hero, teacher, healer, Lord and Savior, "Way, truth and life" FULL LIGHT!!

"God now truly dwells with mankind." = Revelation III:III.



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**Mary's Field, LTD
P.O. Box 99
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