

Christmas reminds me...

Christmas! We all know the biblical story. We know how it has been celebrated in song, story, parable and prose. We all know most of the lyrics of the Christmas songs and dare to sing them. We all know the pressures and expectations that surround the season and most often, how such pressures and expectations leave a hollow echo deep within our spirit. We all know that in the retelling of its story, much of its magic, appeal and substance becomes paper-thin. We all know that as we grow older, the appeal of a gift-giving jolly, fat gift-giver loses its magic and appeal. We all know that we tire of the seasonal piped music in stores and malls before and during the season, often leaves a taste of commercial resentment. We all know that the promises and expectations of the season can challenge even the most matured mental stability.

So, how do I see the Christmas season and story with new eyes and new perspective? How can I understand and appreciate again a story that is almost as old as creation and yet as new as today? How can I rise above the ordinary and mundane to embrace a birthing that is as new as the gift of a new day?

So, what does Christmas remind me of? Christmas reminds me that every new birth of a child is a reminder of a God who continues to surprise and believe in us.

Christmas reminds me of a promisor whose promise is delivered in a most extraordinary way at very ordinary time.

Christmas reminds me that a promise no matter so old or ancient can and will be fulfilled in its own way and own time.

Christmas reminds me that a birth that changed the world can happen in faraway places from home and yet make everyone feel at home.

Christmas reminds me that there are Marys who receive such promises, treasure them in their hearts and willingly fulfil them.

Christmas reminds me that the old and wise Simeons of the world never lose sight of that promise and are blessed to be able to see that promise fulfilled in their lifetime.

Christmas reminds me that even in the darkest times of season and life, there are always surprises that can give us a new perspective and insight in life's journey.

Christmas reminds me that the ordinary shepherds of sheep and soul can see and touch heaven on earth in new ways.

Christmas reminds me that wise and not so wise folks can visit from afar and yet be so near to Mystery itself.

Christmas reminds me that the source of all our gift-giving, in season and out of season, is always a reflection on that original gift that cannot or ever will be surpassed in its love and generosity.

Christmas reminds me that even in the moments of wintery discontent in our lives, there is always a reason to believe, to hope and to love.

Christmas reminds me that childlike eyes are needed to discover and embrace someone who is always new, exciting and surprising.

Christmas reminds me that often the best surprises of all come in the most likely ways, times and places.

Christmas reminds me that Christmas is celebrated, experienced and transcends; irrespective of age, country, race or rituals.

Christmas reminds me that anticipation and expectation of riches and blessings beyond measure is possible when we discover the giver of the gift only gives the best to those who believe, hope and love. Christmas reminds me that no words can explain or capture the presence of the Word itself.

Christmas reminds me that there is one story that begins all other stories that end eventually with a happy ever after journey.

Christmas reminds me that when words fail me to experience and understand its mystery, I have no choice but to default to the Word itself.

Christmas reminds me of lots of things, but most of all of St. Paul's letter to the Romans where he says, "Oh! The depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and unsearchable his ways. For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor? Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid? For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him, be glory forever (Rom. 11:33-36)