



Daily Reflections

January 1, 2017

Scripture

Luke 2:16-21

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

When they saw this,
they made known the message
that had been told them about this child.

All who heard it were amazed
by what had been told them by the shepherds.

And Mary kept all these things,
reflecting on them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God
for all they had heard and seen,
just as it had been told to them.

When eight days were completed for his circumcision,
he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel
before he was conceived in the womb.

Our Scripture Reflection

After hearing the Divine message of the shepherds, Luke tells us that Mary, "kept all these things reflecting on them in her heart." The Greek verb "sumballo" means to ponder, or to toss around, or to hold. Notice Mary's response to the incredible events that have happened to her: she does not panic, cry out, become anxious or afraid, she humbly and patiently reflects on it all with faith and trust. The key focus of Mary's thinking is, "what does my Lord want of me?" If only we all could be so calm and peaceful when confronted with astonishing events.

Food for your Journey

I was confined to bed rest during the last half of my pregnancy before my daughter, Kate, was born. ...

Because of my mandatory confinement to the bed or the couch, I was unable to do the usual baby shopping and preparations. I was also feeling quite sorry for myself and afraid that I wouldn't be able to give my daughter everything she'd need during her first few weeks. One Tuesday afternoon, I was complaining ... well, whining really ... about this. I was frustrated, and I wondered out loud how I'd get the highchair, baby carrier, bassinette, stroller, baby bathtub, etc. that we needed.

The wise woman visiting that afternoon, listened intently. When I finished, she very firmly and warmly asked, "Do you have a blanket?" I nodded.

"Do you have a drawer you can empty?" I looked at her quizzically. "Dear, if you have a blanket and a drawer, you have everything a newborn needs." In that moment I was transformed; instead of feeling sorry for myself and afraid I couldn't provide, I felt overwhelmed with gratitude for what I did have. ...

My daughter never slept in a drawer, and she had a lot more than a blanket. It's amazing how much more than enough we have, isn't it?

--Wendy Bailey, from "A Blanket and a Drawer,"
<http://njregionalpresbyter.wordpress.com>.

Prayer from the Heart

Lord God, some of us are a little like the Shepherds;
Just carrying on with our jobs... despite the turbulence in the world scene.
Give us a message ... send us an angel
That will start us seeking a new way of life.

Lord God, others of us are like the Wise Men from the east;
We can see the need of some power to come and to give us direction;
But we don't know in which direction to go.
Give us the wisdom to see that it is not in physical power
that our salvation lies, but in love and humility.

We ask You to make us expectant, instead of planners.
We ask You to make us seekers, rather than know-it-alls.
We ask You for grace so that we are ready to receive.
We ask You for humility so that we are prepared to accept
Your way of doing things.

We ask You for faith, and faith is a gift, really to believe.

--"Send Us an Angel," by George MacLeod. An excerpt from *The Whole Earth Shall Cry Glory: Iona Prayers* (Wild Goose Publications, 2006).