



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2020

“PIETA”

By Kim Sheard

*And Mary said,
“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name”. ~Luke 1:46-49 (NRSV)*

This scripture is titled “Mary’s Song of Praise,” and occurs during Mary’s visit with Elizabeth, John the Baptist’s mother. Young Mary is obviously pleased at God’s blessing on her and trust in her. A surprise baby was thrust upon Mary, but she fully embraced her role, giving birth to Him and raising Him as a beloved son.

God required a lot of Jesus by sending Him to Earth, but in God’s wisdom also provided the nurturing love of a mother to help ease His way.

You have probably seen a photo of Michaelangelo’s famous statue, *The Pieta*. It portrays Mary cradling Jesus’ dead body after the crucifixion, paralleling her cradling her newborn son in the stable. Thirty-three short years separated her joy at her son’s birth and her agony over His death. During that time, she fed Him, washed Him, taught Him, prayed for Him, and then, at the foot of the cross, watched Him die.

The downside of giving Jesus to Mary was that a loving mother lost her son, something no mother wants to experience.

The downside of Christmas for us comes later, at Good Friday.

That doesn’t mean we can’t enjoy the Christmas season and all that it brings. We just need to also remember what is coming: Christ’s sacrificial death and then resurrection at Easter!

Thought for Today: Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter are unavoidably linked.

Prayer: Lord God, as we prepare for Christmas, help us to remember the whole story of Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection. Amen.