

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020

“SO THIS IS LOVE PART 5”

By Rev. Joanna Dietz

*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.*

*His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.*

*He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.*

*He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;*

*he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.*

*He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” ~ Luke 1:47-55 (NRSV)*

Today is Christmas Eve! The long anticipated day has almost arrived! Our excitement and joy overflow with the remembrance that Christ came to earth to save us from our sins. But this journey has not been easy. And for many of you today, it may be tinged in sadness. This year has been hard. We have lost loved ones. We have lived through ten months of a worldwide pandemic.

In today's scripture Mary starts with praise in a proclamation that we call the Magnificat. Mary had just gone to visit Elizabeth, who was 6 months pregnant and well past childbearing years. Although Mary and Joseph's marriage contract had been signed, they had not yet finished up to a year of preparation before the marriage contract was complete, so were not yet living together. Joseph even considered divorcing her. Mary knew the risks in saying yes to God. But still she willingly said yes.

God does not always call us to simple tasks. However, God usually works us up to that level of obedience that leads us to a big yes. Maybe your relationship with God is new or not firmly formed. Or maybe you have been a Christian for a long time but haven't fully committed to God. Or maybe God has the next big step ready for you to take. Regardless, Christmas day reminds us that Mary's yes led to salvation for us all. And this leads to joy in the Lord.

Prayer: Holy God, Creator of each of us, Guide and Guardian, we thank you for the Christ Child come to earth. We thank you for the gift of eternal life, given because a young woman said yes. May we celebrate this Christmas by listening to the gift you have for us today through our obedience to you. Amen.

*Thought for the Day: This year has not been easy for anyone. But if we follow where God leads, could there be joy for us, too?*