

Advent 4B - December 2023

Humor: Mary vs. Eve

One week a Sunday school teacher had just finished telling her class the Christmas story, how Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem and how Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger. After telling the story the teacher asked, "Who do you think the most important woman in the Bible is?" Of course, the teacher was expecting one of the kids to say, "Mary." But instead, a little boy raised his hand and said, "Eve." So the teacher asked him why he thought Eve was the most important woman in the Bible. And the little boy replied, "Well, they named two days of the year after Eve. You know, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve."

"I'm the president of 7-UP!"

Three men were pacing nervously outside the delivery room at a hospital when the head nurse came out beaming. To the first she said, "Congratulations, sir, you are the father of twins." "Terrific!" said the man, "I just signed a contract with the Minnesota Twins and this'll be great press."

To the second man the nurse said, "Congratulations to you too. You are the father of healthy triplets!" "Fantastic!" he said. "I'm the vice-president of 3-M Company. This'll be great P.R.!"

At that point the third man turned ashen and ran for the door. "What's wrong, sir? Where are you going?" called the nurse. As he jumped into his car, the man shouted, "I'm dashing to my office to resign. I'm the president of 7-UP!"

That's exactly what Mary was feeling as she listened to the angel spell out what God wanted of her: "Virgin birth?! Are you crazy? Who's going to believe that? I'll be stoned to death as soon as the neighbors see I'm pregnant! Dear God, what are you asking of me?" (Msgr. Dennis Clarke) (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

"Have you found him?"

Here is another Anthony de Mello story. The young hermit (*sannyasi*) came to the master in hermit robes and asked. "For years I have been seeking God. I have sought him everywhere that he is said to be: on mountain peaks, the vastness of the desert, the silence of the cloister, and the dwellings of the poor." "Have you found him?" the master asked. "No. I have not. Have you?" What could the master say? The evening sun was sending shafts of golden light into the room. Hundreds of sparrows were

twittering on a nearby banyan tree. In the distance one could hear the sound of highway traffic. A mosquito droned a warning that it was going to strike...And yet this man could sit there and say he had not found God. After a while the young hermit left, disappointed, to search elsewhere. Since God can be found everywhere, we must continually look for Him and especially, perhaps in the most difficult places. That is why in the first reading today; God tells David that He cannot be contained in a man-made Temple. As we prepare to celebrate the reality of Christmas, the feast of *Emmanuel*, (God-With-Us), let us be prepared to recognize the God whose presence can be known and experienced in the distressing problems of life.

[\(https://frtonyshomilies.com/\)](https://frtonyshomilies.com/)

Tranquility in the Midst of Turmoil

Two artists were commissioned to paint their conception of peace. A panel of distinguished judges would determine which artist had best captured the idea. The winner would get a rich commission. And after they had been painting for a long time, the judges assembled to view their work.

The first artist unveiled his painting, and there was a beautiful, magnificent pastoral scene, with a farmer coming in after a hard day in the fields. His wife was cooking, his children were playing around the hearth, and all was at peace in this tranquil and beautiful farm.

"That's it," said the judges, "but we'll look at the other rendering anyway." They removed the veil of the second painting. Instead of a tranquil, pastoral scene, there was a raging waterfall producing a mist which communicated hostility. But over on the side of the waterfall was a tiny branch of a tree growing out of a rock, and on the end of the branch was a bird's nest. And on the edge of the nest was a mother bird, singing her heart out in the midst of the turbulence around her. The judges thought for a moment, then said, "This is peace, tranquility and celebration in the midst of turmoil."

We need a little Christmas right now, but the little Christmas that we need is the courage that comes as the favor of God. We must remember that the Christian community has done its best when it has gone against the wind.

(by William L. Self from *Have I Got News for You!*)