

Unexpected Presence of God

Quite a few years ago, my granddaughter, who is now 15 years old and who was one and ½ years old at the time, was at our house for Christmas. In 1985, I had purchased a Baby Jesus at the gift shop at Notre Dame in Paris. Every Christmas, that Baby Jesus laid under the Christmas tree. Evie toddled over to the tree, and I was worried that she might fall into the tree and hurt herself or God forbid, break the Baby Jesus.

This precious child bent over and picked up the Baby Jesus. I thought, “Oh no!” But she gently kissed the Baby Jesus and placed him carefully back into his basket of straw. I will never forget this and think of it not only at Christmas but at other times during the year. Jesus said, “Render the little children unto me.” Matthew 19:14. Is that because he remembered his childhood? Is it because we are all children of God?

As I wrote this on October 12, the news media is talking about all the shortages that will occur and that we won't be able to find and buy the gifts we want to give for Christmas. But what are the true gifts of Christmas? There is no shortage for us as believers in Christ. We get and can give the gift of Jesus's birth as proof of God's abiding and abounding love for us.

So, this Advent Season, reflect on your blessings as you prepare and anticipate the birth of The Christ Child. Maybe rediscover a moment when God was truly in your midst during this time. Was it a special gathering or Church service that you attended? Was it a special effort that someone made to share with you? Was it a special hymn or movie? Surely all of us have had a moment, like I did with my precious granddaughter, when the unexpected presence of God impacted me for the rest of my life.

Thanks be to God.
Jill Heck



Evie, December 2008... one year after she picked up Baby Jesus.