



# REFLECTIONS

December 8, 2013, Refreshed from the Archives of December 3, 2006

**But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."**

*Luke 2:10*

## Blessing in Disguise

Almost every day Max rolled his motorized wheelchair out the front door of his assisted living home. The freshness of the outdoors reminded him of the active life he lived as a young man before being struck down by a massive stroke. Since that tragic day his life became confined to the accessibilities of a wheelchair. But the limited life he led did not dampen his joy for living, nor was Max the least bit hesitant to engage in conversation with us when we came to the facility to visit Mom.

It was a particularly difficult time in our lives. We knew Mom's time on earth was ticking away, so those visits with her were precious. She was the one who brought my brother and me into the world and who nurtured us and loved us unconditionally all of our lives. Watching her decline during her final days left us with heavy hearts, but Max offered just the respite we needed.

During interludes away from Mom, we visited with him to keep him company, make him laugh, and distract him from the sense of helplessness we were certain he must be feeling. We did our best to help him feel good about life. Little did we realize then but Max helped us much more than we could ever have helped him.

One of God's special gifts to us in the world is through the messages He sends us when we are troubled by heavy hearts. And Max was one of God's messengers. He may have been a man passing our way along his own journey; or he may have been an angel placed in our path just for that time. Either way, Max entered our lives as a blessing in disguise. He lifted our spirits during those difficult days with his optimistic outlook on life. Through him, we received a message of God's love just when we needed it most.

After Mom passed away, I drove by the place occasionally to see if Max was in his usual place outside the front door of his institutional home. I found him there only once and I stopped by to say hello again. Then he was gone. We don't know what happened to Max, but I'm sure he is right where God wants him to be just as he was when he was there for us. At the time, we thought we were taking care of him. We know now that Max was there to take care of us. He was one of God's messengers, timely placed to lift our heavy hearts and to bring good news of great joy that is for all the people—the good news of God's love.

And you know?—I believe God calls us to be messengers for him too.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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