



REFLECTIONS

December 18, 2022

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace, good will toward men.**

Luke 2:14 KJV

Spirit of Christmas

“Richard,” Armando began. “You need to know my memories of Christmas are filled with disappointment, dread, and tears. Not joy.” His eyes spoke to me even more powerfully than his words. Armando needed me to know that memories of Christmas opened deep wounds for him. I needed to know that too.

Basking in the splendor of my own Christmas memories that day, I stood before him, and other employees, intent to set the tone for a Christmas celebration akin to the ones I enjoyed. Of course, I knew of unrest in the world, of poverty and hunger, of danger and cruelty; but the thrill that enveloped the warmth and love of the Christmas seasons I lived hid the realities of the world from my mind. How presumptuous of me to imagine Christmas for everyone else to be even remotely like mine.

Armando’s emotions drew me into deep thought. As thrilling and love filled as my Christmases have been, maybe the spirit of Christmas gets lost in the hoopla of them.

The spirit of Christmas embodies the story of Mary and Joseph, a few shepherds in a nearby field, and some stargazing Magi bearing gifts far to the east. The story tells of difficult travels, a crowded inn, and an unfit crib; and it tells of an angel with good news about God’s precious gift to us all—the birth of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah, Christ the Lord.

And it tells of the night hosts of angels filled the starlit sky saying:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

It is the Christmas story I wish had told Armando that day.

“You are the light of the world,”

Richard +

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