

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

Forrest Church

All Souls Church

2008

Not a little surprised to be with you yet again on this sacred eve and feeling truly graced, I offer up these words of consecration and praise.

In the refracted starlight, for a blessed moment, don't be starstruck, simply be. Just be. In this time of economic stress and global fear, which takes a viral purchase on our souls even as it disrupts the patterns and threatens the well being of so many lives, tonight in the glimmering of candles on this dark, cold eve, be present. Be open. Do nothing. Force nothing. Your worries and fears, your hopes and ambitions, let them be. No more striving, not now. We've done enough this year. We have all done enough. Too much even. Too much and too many and too often. Around and around the track we go, racing to stay abreast of our fears and keep pace with our plots, driven by our fancies and prancing little egos -- on Dancer, on Blitzen -- speeding them on, keeping them spinning. So stop. Stop for Christmas. Be present. Be open. Be awake. Force nothing. Listen and lighten up. Ease your heartstrings. Catch your breath. Put down your lists. Just be. Here. Now. Together. May God scatter and diffuse our pride in the imagination of our hearts. And may music sooth our tattered souls.

Listen. On this night of song, listen for angels. Angels of mercy and of healing. Angels of mystery. Angels of birth. Angels dreaming, dancing in candlelight. Imagine yourself in a field

under stars of wonder. Listen and imagine. Do nothing. Just wait. For the hint of a new birth within you. A harbinger of hope, beyond all seeking and striving. For you too are the child. We are the child. Love children. Children of hope in fearful times. Children who light candles against the darkness. Children who sing their hearts out.

Each of us has a story. They are all different. And they are all one. Brought to light under the one sun that will set one day on each of our horizons, heart to heart, dust to dust. But each path is also different, and at times surpassing strange. With abiding gratitude and humble praise, I close this, our Christmas meditation, with my mantra for living more abundantly,

Let us want what we have—
Praying for health, if we are blessed with health,
For friendship, if we are blessed with friends,
For family, if we are blessed with family,
For work, if we are blessed with tasks that await our doing,
And if our lives are dark, may we remember to want nothing more than the loving Affection of those whose hearts are broken by our pain,

Let us do what we can—
Not dream impossible dreams or climb every mountain,
But dream one possible dream and climb one splendid mountain,
That our life may be blessed with attainable meaning.

And Let us be who we are—
Embrace our God-given nature and talents.
Answer the call that is ours, not another's,
Thereby enhancing our little world and the greater world we share.

That is my Christmas prayer:
What what you have;
Do what you can;
Be who you are.
Call it thoughtful wishing.

All we have to do is put our heart in it.
And there's one more bonus.
Unlike wishful thinking, thoughtful wishes always come true.

Amen. I love you. Mary Christmas. And may God bless us all.