



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

December 4, 2022: The Second Sunday in Advent

Faith: the 2nd Week of Advent



The second candle in Advent symbolizes faith and is called the "Bethlehem Candle." It reminds us of Mary and Joseph's faith on their arduous trip to the small city where Jesus was born. As we light the candle of faith this week, we give thanks for God's promise of love for us and all creation and pray for renewed faith this Advent season.

The Birth of Jesus Foretold: Luke 1:26-38 - The Angel Gabriel visits Mary

The angel said, "Greetings favored one! The Lord is with you. Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end... Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." [Luke 1:30-33, 38]

The Journey Begins with a Walk

The journey to the manger begins, not with passive waiting, but with a walk. After the angel visited Mary, then came the imperial command for a census in the Roman empire. Imagine the pure physicality of Mary and Joseph's walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem! A heavily pregnant Mary. Joseph looking for food and shelter. The dusty trip on foot and maybe a donkey for Mary to ride. And we cannot forget that Mary and Joseph are not yet married.



What do we know about Mary, the woman central to the Advent story? Surprisingly, not much. The four Gospels paint different pictures of Mary. We do know this: Mary was a Jewish peasant girl in the small village of Nazareth. She undoubtedly possessed a solid faith in God as Gabriel testified: "Greetings, favored one. The Lord is with you." It took Mary's intense courage and faith to make the journey to Bethlehem.

Like Mary and Joseph, we begin our journey toward Christmas in Advent. Let us walk with the Holy Spirit, mindfully and intentionally and faithfully, with our hearts and minds open to all the possibilities this expectant season brings.

Prayer

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation and your angels to announce Jesus' birth: Give us grace to heed their messages and walk onward this Advent with faith in You, trusting in your grace as our guiding lantern. Amen.

Let us keep in our prayers: for the soul of Nancy; those who mourn, especially Nancy's family; for the poor in spirit who seek God or a deeper knowledge of Him; Lord, hear our prayer!