

# Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission



## Blood and Bone

*This is the day that wise men  
And shepherds came to the poor manger,  
This is the day of the news  
About making easier bent souls.*

*See the king of anguish and tears  
Lying in his cradle  
Wrapped with sins' sadness,  
Wearing the thorns of the world.*

*The complicated purpose of love  
And God's living workmanship are interwoven  
In the little flesh  
At Christmas*

*By: Gwyn Thomas*

I have always loved Epiphany. More than the sentimental recognition of the Magi arriving at the stable, it has always represented moments in my own life when I have felt God present. A flash of truth that transcended my understanding or logic or limitations. Ethereal. The wisp of the Spirit moving about me bringing comfort. This time, however, as I sat down to write about Epiphany, I came upon this Christmas poem, the last stanza of which spoke to me of Epiphany in a new way.

The complicated purpose of love. There is little comfort and certainly nothing ethereal about these words. In them, they hold the messiness of life. Blood and bone. They hold the beauty interwoven in that blood and bone - - beauty made possible *because of* blood and bone. Exposed vulnerability. The cost, anguish, of love. For entering fully into life, loving fully in life, means great loss. It means losing your life to find it.

God's presence, not an ethereal translucent aura, rather viscerally alive in moments of deep love. The kind of love that physically hurts. In birth and in death.

Is that not the message of Christmas, the message of Easter? The greatest of vulnerabilities, born naked, unprotected, in a stable? Dying, naked, unprotected, on a cross? Unprotected and yet enfolded in God's love? Enfolding us in God's love?

Is that not the lesson for us in this time of Epiphany? Unprotected from the harshness of life, we are. Even more so when we risk everything for love. And, yet, is it not in our most exposed, weakest of moments, when we can most fully feel enfolded in and by his love? Enfolded by the One born in a stable, dying on a cross? Enfolding us still? Immanuel with us at our birth and our death. Present in all the thousands of births and deaths we experience throughout life. God's living workmanship, working a miracle in us through his love all along the way.

May you in this Season of Epiphany feel enfolded in and by his love.

Rev. Linda L. McCarty  
President & CEO

*Dedicated to our brothers and sisters in Guatemala  
who have the ability to sense his presence in all things.*

*Interwoven in their blood and bone, his presence, in such a way that  
allows me to glimpse him in their faces, creating a longing in me to be closer to him.*

*And, in those moments, I know that  
he is drawing me closer to him through them.  
May it be so for you too as we meet again in Guatemala in 2022.*



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