Advent Devotion Week 4

“Rejoicing in God”

_Luke 1:46-55; Micah 5:2-5a_

What does one think of immediately after a question like, “What’s your reason for thanking God?” This was posed to my children and husband during a family devotion a few nights ago. Without much hesitation, they cited how God had helped and provided for them in work, health, home and even choice of schools!

When Mary was greeted by Elizabeth with confirmation that the child she would bear was the Messiah ( _Luke 1:41-45_), she broke out in a praise song with many reasons to rejoice over. She started with the Lord’s personal and eternal impact on her ( _Luke 1:46-49_):

‘for He has been mindful of His humble servant…’
‘for the Mighty One has done great things for me…’

And moved on to the wonders of His Ways and impact on her forefathers ( _Luke 1:50-55_):

‘He has performed mighty deeds…’
‘He has brought down rulers … and has lifted up the humble.’
‘He has filled the hungry with good things...’
‘He has helped his servant Israel…’

She rejoiced in the greatness of God by praising His merciful and just nature. This was in spite of the oppression during the Roman regime when the Jews were nothing more than second-class citizens. Even within her own community, Mary had faced possible ridicule and suspicion surrounding her pregnancy. Nevertheless, she held onto the testimonies of her forefathers and declared (in present tense) that God’s continuing ‘mercy extends to those who fear him from generation to generation.’
As prophesied in Micah 5:4, through the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, God’s people will experience peace and security, as Jesus ‘will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God’. Today, all who receive this amazing gift of salvation can confidently and joyfully declare that we will always enjoy the presence, love and peace of God Almighty, no matter the earthly circumstances we face.

So, in actuality, we only need one reason to rejoice, not 10,000 reasons. And the reason is that God has lovingly offered us an everlasting way to enjoy His presence, through the birth and death of His Son Jesus Christ.

No matter the uncertainty we may face personally, like Mary, may we remember and rejoice over the wonders of His love and presence in our lives, as well as the Hope He offers.

**Reflection:**

a) When was the last time you rejoiced for simply being a child of God, even when things were not going smooth in your life? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you receive God’s peace and hope.

b) How will you share this joy of Christmas to others this season?

**Pray:**

Dear Heavenly Father, You are worthy of all praise because You are the source of true joy. Everything we are and have belong to You. Help us, by Your Holy Spirit, to rejoice not only in the fellowship of family and friends this season, but more reflectively, in the wonders of Your salvation plan and great love. May Your Name be forever praised, through our words and deeds. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.

*Michelle Wong*
Carol

“Joy To The World”

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the World, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.