

CHRISTMAS EVE 2016

MERRY CHRISTMAS! LET'S START WITH A LITTLE MERRIMENT...

1. JOHN WAS FRESH OUT OF IDEAS FOR A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW FOR CHRISTMAS.

SO HE BOUGHT HER A LARGE PLOT IN AN EXPENSIVE CEMETERY.

THE FOLLOWING CHRISTMAS HE ALSO COULDN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO GET HER, SO HE DIDN'T BUY HER ANYTHING...

SHE COMPLAINED HE WAS SO THOUGHTLESS AND WAS JUST TAKING HER FOR GRANTED.

HE SAID, "WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT? YOU STILL HAVEN'T USED THE PRESENT I GAVE YOU LAST YEAR." (MY APOLOGIES TO M-I-LS)

2. A FIRST GRADER TOLD HER CLASSMATES THAT SANTA LIVED IN CHINA.

WHEN HE TEACHER HEARD THAT, SHE ASKED THE LITTLE GIRL WHY SHE THINKS SANTA LIVES IN CHINA.

SHE SAID ALL OF HER GIFTS SAY "MADE IN CHINA"...

3. WHEN TWO LITTLE BOYS CAME TO VISIT THEIR GRANDMOTHER AND SPEND AN OVERNIGHT AT HER HOME, AS THEY WERE SAYING THEIR PRAYERS, ONE OF THE BOYS STARTED LOUDLY SHOUTING HIS PRAYERS:

"GOD, PLEASE SEND ME A VIDEO GAME AND A NEW BIKE."

HIS BROTHER ASKED WHY HE WAS SHOUTING, "GOD ISN'T DEAF." THE FIRST LITTLE BOY SAID, "I KNOW, BUT GRANDMA ALMOST IS"...

4. THE MUSIC TEACHER WAS DIRECTING A GROUP OF CHILDREN WHO WERE SINGING THE CAROL: "WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCK AT NIGHT" TO A PACKED HOUSE AT THE SCHOOL'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT.

TO HER HORROR, SHE REALIZED ONE OF THE YOUNG BOYS WAS PROUDLY SINGING AS LOUD AS HE COULD:

"WHILE THE SHEPHERDS WASHED THEIR SOCKS AT NIGHT."

HOW ABOUT THAT?

*I DECIDED T BEGIN WITH SOME HUMOR BECAUSE I THINK I'VE
BEEN TOO SERIOUS LATELY AND AFTER READING AN EXCELLENT LITTLE
BOOK ON THE "SOUL OF CHRISTMAS" BY THOMAS MOORE...*

*HE TALKS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CHEER AS A WAY OF
CARING FOR THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS AND CARING FOR OUR SOUL
DURING CHRISTMAS...*

*HE MAKES A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS AND
THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS....*

*THE SPIRIT, THE SPIRITUALITY OF CHRISTMAS IS TO BE FOUND IN THE
TEACHINGS ABOUT CHRIST AND THE INCARNATION AND THE EMPHASIS
ON THE DIVINE....SACRED SCRIPTURE*

*WHILE THE SOUL OF THE SEASON IS THERE IN THE GIFTS AND THE
GOOD CHEER....THE CONNECTION BETWEEN US DURING THE SEASON
THE SPIRIT SHOWS UP IN OUR GOSPEL STORY IN THE APPEARANCE OF
THE ANGEL AND THE MESSAGE*

"DO NOT BE AFRAID...I PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY...

A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN FOR YOU WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD....

*AND SUDDENLY THERE WAS A MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST
WITH THE ANGEL SINGING:*

*"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE TO THOSE ON
WHOM HIS FAVOR RESTS."*

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS IS DIVINE, ANGELIC, IN THE SKY...

*THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS IS IN THE SIMPLE SHEPHERDS KEEPING NIGHT
WATCH...AND REJOICING*

*THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS IS IN THE INFANT WRAPPED IN SWADDLING
CLOTHES AND LYING IN A MANGER....*

THE SOUL OF CHRISTMAS IS DOWN TO EARTH

THE SPIRIT IS VERY IMPORTANT - IT FEEDS THE SOUL

*THE SPIRIT, HOWEVER, CAN GO TO EXTREMES, THEN IT BECOMES
DETACHED, ISOLATED IN OUR HEADS AND THOUGHTS ONLY.....*

AND OVERLY SERIOUS - THIS IS MY TENDENCY...

TOO MUCH SPIRIT, NOT ENOUGH SOUL...

*GRANTED, THE SOUL STUFF IS COMMON, ORDINARY AND CLOSE TO
HOME MORE ROUTINE - AS MOORE SAYS IN HIS BOOK -*

*BUT JUST BECAUSE WE TAKE IT FOR GRANTED, THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT
ANY LESS VALUABLE...QUITE THE CONTRARY*

*HERE ARE SOME OF THE SOUL-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES WHICH MOORE
TALKS ABOUT IN HIS BOOK THAT TAKE PLACE DURING THE CHRISTMAS
SEASON:*

*FAMILY AND FRIENDS GATHERING, SANTA AND CHILDREN, GIFT-GIVING,
GATHERING AROUND A DINNER TABLE, FOOD, SINGING CAROLS,*

RECITING TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS STORIES AND POEMS,

*REMEMBERING CHRISTMASSES OF THE PAST AND PEOPLE WHO WERE
PRESENT -*

MEMORY IS IMPORTANT FOR THE SOUL -

ESP. REMEBERING OUR LOVED ONES...

***ALSO DECORATING - GIVING EVERYTHING THE RADIANCE OF
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.....***

***CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR US AREN'T THEY?
ESPECIALLY IN DEEP AND DARK DECEMBER....***

***THEY SHED LIGHT ON OUR WORLD AND DISPEL A LITTLE DARKNESS -
REMINDING US THAT OUR MAIN TASK IN LIFE IS TO BE AMONG THOSE
WHO HAVE THE SPARK OF LIGHT IN US....***

***DECORATING, CHRISTMAS LIGHTS ARE MEANT TO NOURISH OUR SOUL...
AND OUR CELEBRATIONS...LIKE THIS ONE***

***THESE ARE THE ACTIVITIES THAT NOURISH OUR SOUL DURING THE
CHRISTMAS SEASON....***

***E.G. FOR ME I TALKED TO A FRIEND AND HIS WIFE LIVING IN SAN DIEGO,
CALIFORNIA, WHO I ONLY TALK TO A COUPLE TIMES A YEAR....
I'VE KNOWN SINCE GRADE SCHOOL***

***BUT I CAUGHT UP - FOUND OUT HE BROKE HIS LEG IN TWO PLACES A
MONTH AGO...***

I'M GETTING TOGETHER WITH A COUPLE FRIENDS NEXT WEEK...

***OUR COMMUNITY ON WEDNESDAY NITE WENT TO "CHRISTMAS AT THE
CARILLON" - I RECOMMEND THAT, ESP. RIDING THE CAROUSEL WITH
THE YOUNG CHILDREN - GOOD FOR MY SOUL***

***OUR FAMILY IS GETTING TOGETHER ON TUESDAY FOR MASS AND
DINNER...***

CONNECTING WITH LOVED ONES NOURISHES OUR SOUL

GIFT GIVING IS MEANT TO NOURISH THE SOUL....

NO WONDER IT IS SO DIFFICULT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE RECENTLY - YOU FEEL THAT VOID

ONE THING WE ARE GOING TO DO SINCE WE LOST TWO BROTHERS IN LAW THIS PAST YEAR - WE ARE GOING TO GET HELIUM BALOONS AND LET THEM GO IN A RITUAL AS A WAY A TRANSFORMING IN A LITTLE WAY OUR SADNESS INTO A ACT OF HOPE AND LOVE TOGETHER...

THAT NOURISHES THE SOUL - PROMOTES HEALING

CHRISTMAS IS INDEED THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR - IN MANY WAYS WE SUSPEND OUR NORMAL, ROUTINE ACTIVITIES

WE TAKE OFF WORK, WE GIVE GIFTS, WE EAT MORE, WE PLAY MORE

SOUL IS ABOUT HEART, INTIMACY, CONNECTION AND PRESENTING OUR INNER LIFE TO OTHERS, TO OUR WORLD...

AS MOORE SAYS: "CHRISTMAS SHOWS THAT IT'S POSSIBLE FOR A HUMAN BEING TO BE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL POSSIBLE AND YET REMAIN DEEPLY HUMAN AT THE SAME TIME. THE GOSPELS PORTRAY A JESUS WHO IS SUPREMELY COMPASSIONATE AND CAPABLE OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP, WHO LOVES GOD AND USES HIS WIT, AND AT THE SAME TIME IS FOREVER AWARE THAT HE HAS A FATHER IN THE SKY, A FATHER AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL FAR BEYOND THE HUMAN"

SO, IF WE TAKE CHRISTMAS TO HEART, IT WILL NOURISH OUR SOUL,

WE NEED TO GET PAST THE ANXIETIES IN ARRANGING GIFTS AND PARTIES.....

WHEN WE DO, WE WILL REDISCOVER EACH YEAR AT THIS TIME THAT

OUR SOUL GROWS AND WE EXPERIENCE A NEW BIRTH, OF SORTS, A NEW AND EXPANDED SOUL.....

LET US PRAY FOR A SOULFUL CHRITMAS!

MY WISH FOR EACH ONE OF YOU...

A MERRY AND SOULFUL CHRISTMAS TO EACH OF YOU!