

A Christmas Reflection

By Joyce Hutchinson

This Christmas season has been a journey of darkness. My husband died last year, and the loneliness that has been my constant companion has seemed almost intolerable at times.

That year, my children were coming home to a house that showed no sign of the holiday season. They were experiencing their own struggle with grief during this wonderful season of joy. My house, without decoration, was just another reminder of the darkness of grief that we had all been experiencing.

It occurred to me, as I was wallowing in self pity, that I was being very selfish. In viewing the Advent season as a time of darkness with no room for hope, I was not allowing the light of Jesus into my heart.

Then the night before Christmas Eve, and just before our children's arrival, I decided to bring the Christmas decorations out of storage. I even found pleasure in putting up the tree and making the house festive for their arrival. Only by the grace of God, was I able to break free of the dark gloominess and draw close to the heart of Emmanuel.

It was a time for celebrating the birth of Jesus who was filled with a love that lit up the world. This act of decorating the house and preparing for this most blessed holiday minimized my grief, and again brought joy into my heart.

As Jesus has taught us by his unconditional love; if we draw near to him, we are better able to accept the things that cannot be changed.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.