

Allowing the Miracle

by Susan Handle Terbay

Every year during Advent we await with anticipation the celebration of Jesus' birth, and we renew hope that maybe this year his message of love and peace in our world will happen. Yet, as his birthday nears, we once again find our world in the midst of wars. Along with war, there is starvation, disease, and poverty. Countless families are living in despair as they struggle for basics: food, shelter, and clothing. The elderly and sick seem to have no voice and the homeless continue to roam our streets. Discrimination, abuse, and hate distort the fact that we are all children of God. Are we so blind as not to see? Are we so deaf as not to hear Jesus' message of love and peace, or are we too fearful, too doubtful, or too indifferent?

Have we become our own Mr. Scrooge—the character from Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* who became blind and deaf to the humanity surrounding him? Mr. Scrooge was warned by the Spirit of Christmas Present to be aware of “want and ignorance,” but especially ignorance. Does our greed replace the want and need of our brothers and sisters? Does our apathy feed into our ignorance of the reality of those we encounter in our day to day?

In the story, Mr. Scrooge was given the opportunity to change. God gave us the opportunity to change when Jesus was born more than 2,000 years ago so that love and peace can become a way of life and not a distant dream. As with Ebenezer Scrooge, we can live and honor Christmas in our hearts and keep it all year long—all we have to do is remember the message of the baby, born of a woman that early morning in Bethlehem.

Scrooge allowed the spirits to show him the miracles of change and hope. Mary allowed the miracle of Jesus' birth to bring God's love into the world. Where are we when it comes to letting go and allowing the miracles that are destined for us happen?