

December 2021

“Advent Poem” by St. John of the Cross

If you want, the Virgin will come walking down the road  
pregnant with the Holy and say,  
“I need shelter for the night.  
Please take me inside your heart, my time is so close.”  
Then, under the roof of your soul,  
you will witness the sublime intimacy,  
the divine, the Christ, taking birth forever,  
as she grasps your hand for help,  
for each of us is the midwife of God, each of us.  
Yes, there, under the dome of your being,  
does creation come into existence eternally,  
through your womb, dear pilgrim,  
the sacred womb of your soul,  
as God grasps our arms for help:  
for each of us is His beloved servant never far.  
If you want, the virgin will come walking down the street,  
pregnant with Light, and sing!

As we approach the conclusion of another challenging year, we can take solace in the truth that *our present circumstances don't determine where we can go; they merely determine where we start.*<sup>1</sup> As Christians, we are blessed that we get to start again, every year, to “witness the sublime intimacy, the divine, the Christ, taking birth forever.” In this season of hope, peace, joy and love, we celebrate that God knows our needs and the needs of those people we serve. God has acted and is at work in our world.

As I near the fulfillment of my first year as your bishop, I am grateful for all we have accomplished together. I am thankful for all the new relationships and mindful of those people I have yet to meet. My blessing be upon you, and may you feel the delight that God takes in you as midwives of the divine.

Peace and Christmas blessings upon you all,



+Anna

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<sup>1</sup> Quote adapted from words by Dr. Nido Qubein, motivational speaker and president of High Point University