



An Advent wrapped in Love.

God's Perfect Gift By Sharon Sorce

It is Advent, the Christmas season, and thoughts turn to gifts. People want to find the perfect gift for the people in their lives. We are preparing to celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus, God's perfect gift to us.

I think back to when I was expecting our first child. How excited I was as I wondered what the baby would be like. How I prayed for his health and well-being. Did Mary wonder about those same things? Then came the birth and the joy of watching the child grow. When Mary kissed her new baby, did she understand that she was kissing the face of God? Were her worries when the boy Jesus was missing the same as my feelings when I lost my son at a shopping mall? The minutes while security helped me find him seemed like hours. The relief and gratitude I felt when he was found were overwhelming! Was that how Mary felt when she and Joseph found Jesus preaching in the temple? Did she embrace Him with the same abandon that I hugged our son? I think of how painful it was when my son was going through hard times and there wasn't anything I could do to change the circumstances. How did Mary endure watching Jesus being beaten? How did she have the strength to



stay near him as he carried the cross and was hanged on that cross?

Jesus wasn't just any baby. Mary accepted her virgin pregnancy when the angel appeared to her. What wonder and admiration I feel when I read the Magnificat. One of my favorite bible verses is when Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, who was also pregnant, and the child within Elizabeth leaped for joy. (Luke 1:38-43) She and the baby within her, John the Baptist, knew that this was something extraordinary. This is the birth that I am so excitedly waiting to celebrate. This is the reason I sing "Yea, Lord we greet thee" with such hope and happiness and appreciation during the worship service on Christmas Eve. After being isolated last year because of the pandemic, this year's service will be even more special than usual. How joyful it will feel to welcome and adore the baby Jesus with my faith family again. This is the gift I cherish the most each year. God gave his son for me and for all. I have Jesus as the perfect example of how to love my neighbor and live my life as pleasing to God. I have salvation and eternal life because of Jesus. I love this gift! Hallelujah. Thank you, God.

