

## Christmas Spirit Merry

### And Radiation

In the quiet of the morning, very early morning a good two hours before the sun will finally pop up, but not out for this is the misty season here in the great Pacific Northwest. I began writing this missive on the Feast of the Holy Innocents and finish it the day after Jimmy Carter left us, making his Greatest Leap.

I burned my solstice fire giving credit to my five thousand plus years of Celtic Ancestry celebrating the return of the sun, Old Sol, on December 21st. But I looked much more forward to the coming of THE Son.

Though I'd much rather lie next to my loved, I am out here in the 'writing chair' with the Spirit. Amen.

Recently read an article in the Times about the two American Astronauts 'stranded' in space. As Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore are showing us, they thrive. She said it best at the September news conference while he was joyfully spinning next to her: "This is my happy place."

When we were young Christmas was all about the presents and without boring you too much, we had quite the tradition. We'd go to Midnight mass and by the time we'd arrive home around 2:00 AM mysteriously or magically the tree, bare underneath when we left, was stacked with presents. Never figured out how 'Santa' mom and dad got that done though I suspected a neighbor though never proved it.

We continued that tradition with my children, though theirs is very different now.

Now, my present comes in one form at Christmas, Him. Don't need anything anyway. He gives us all we need, even in times of serious trouble. We benefited from a random act of kindness by a friend of fifty years. A 'special delivery' arrived from Walmart on Christmas Eve, filled with goodies. Don't know what we would have had Christmas Eve to eat if it had not been for them. Suddenly the Spirit of Christmas past, present and future flooded our home with love, grace, and merriment.

I've had the pleasure of going through radiation for cancer since December 4<sup>th</sup> and will continue through mid-January. Great chance of success. It's my third dance with three different types of big C, beginning when I was thirty-three, and sometimes popping up yearly on the skin now (melanoma). It's why I see Dr. Slash for Cash (my dermatologist) every three months.

This one though is different. Previously it was just 'clear the margins', this one is full blown out zap experiences daily. I must admit, the side effects took me out of action completely, sometimes sleeping up to twenty hours a day with other less pleasant side effects. But I know of those who have it much worse, like many of my fellow patients.

I still haven't figured out the lesson He has for me with this experience, but I believe I will learn it because I believe in Him. In the meantime, you do what you can. You pray a lot, especially for those sitting with you waiting in the cancer ward. You don't try and see the end because even after its done, side effects continue for months. You just try and do the best you can, today.

At least I can still love Him and every other single person. Love does conquer all.

Don't forget there are twelve days of Christmas, ending January 6<sup>th</sup>, the feast of the Three Kings or Magi. Should be three hundred and sixty-five!

Clement