

Cindy Bassett

The Bible Corner



The reluctant angel Part I

Even though there wasn't a cloud in the sky, a dull thunder-like rumble could be heard overhead. In heaven, as in every other year before Christmas, all of the angels had just been called together to receive their celestial assignments concerning the mere mortals of earth. The noise overheard below on earth was actually the excited chatter of the angels. They had talked of nothing but their assignments for days. "What will we be assigned to do?" they mused. "Perhaps one of us will be called on to inspire the world's next great composer."

Everyone knew the stories about the celebrated jobs angels had accomplished in years past. Angels had served as messengers of God to deliver important news to special mortals. One angel had announced to Abraham that he and his wife, Sara, would soon have a son of their own. Later on, another angel had guided Abraham's servant in his search for a suitable wife for his son, Isaac.

Sometimes, angels were the bearers of unhappy tidings. Two angels had warned Abraham and his family of the disaster that destroyed the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Angels had saved lives, too, on occasion. When Daniel had been sentenced to death, angels had surrounded him in prison and kept him safe from the lions.

One of the most famous among all of the angels was Gabriel. It had been Gabriel's

honor to announce to a young girl, Mary, that she had been chosen by God to bear His Son, Jesus.

The angels of heaven are arranged according to a hierarchy of sorts. So when the angels assembled before Christmas, the newest angel took his place at the very end of a long line of more experienced angels. "I wonder what I will be assigned to do," he wondered as he fidgeted nervously. "Surely any number of exciting things will be offered to me."

At last the waiting was over. Gabriel and Michael appeared at the gates of heaven, and the angels came to order. One by one, each of the angels came forward and was handed a small white card with his assignment written on it. As soon as each angel read his instructions, he vanished without a word. Finally, only the newest angel was left.

This angel had secretly been hoping for one particular job. He had learned that the very first angels on earth had been stars. God had created them at the beginning of the world to shine in magnificent brightness in praise of His handiwork. The newest angel was absolutely certain that he could be a most excellent star.

Gabriel handed the angel his instructions. The angel waited just a brief moment before he read them, and when he did, he was stunned. The newest angel looked up questioningly at Gabriel, heaven's most-

esteemed angel, who said simply, "The greatest thing that you can ever accomplish is God's will. Go now in peace to love and serve our Lord."

And with that, the newest angel felt himself whirling down toward the earth, where in the next instant he landed with an unceremonious thump. As soon as he had recovered his balance, the angel again studied the card that he had received from Gabriel. It contained only three words: "LOVE CLARENCE JONES."

Who in the world is Clarence Jones, the angel wondered, and what did this dilapidated, old factory in front of which he had landed have to do with him? The angel did not have to wait long for his answer. A loud, unpleasant bell sounded shrilly, and people started pouring through the front door of the factory.

As soon as the angel saw the man, he realized with dread that he must be Clarence Jones. One of the least appealing things about this man was the gruff expression carved into his beard-stubbled face. "Perhaps that is why the others keep their distance," the angel thought.

Clarence Jones resembled a bird. His nose was slightly hooked, and his beady eyes were dark and expressionless. His hair stuck out in nearly every direction. "There must be some mistake," the angel decided. He would have turned away from this man right then, had it not been for the three words echoing loudly inside of him: "Love Clarence Jones." The angel hastened to follow Clarence.

After a couple of blocks, Clarence stopped and went into a place called Rosie's Tavern. The angel peered in through the front window, and he couldn't help but notice that — even in this crowded place — Clarence sat alone.

The angel waited outside for a very long time. It was quite cold, but angels are not bothered by the things that vex ordinary

folks. What did worry the angel was the number of glasses of whiskey he watched Clarence drink that night.

When he finally emerged from Rosie's, Clarence stumbled and fell in a heap. Once again, the angel heard the words, "Love Clarence Jones." Clarence couldn't see the angel, of course, and his senses had been greatly dulled by all of the whiskey from Rosie's. So ever so gently, the angel helped Clarence up from the sidewalk. The angel then led Clarence — or perhaps Clarence led the angel — all the way to the boarding house where he lived. As soon as Clarence had opened the door, he fell face down on the bed and began snoring.

The angel went over to one broken chair and sat down. He looked around the dismal room. It was surprisingly neat, but then Clarence seemed to have few possessions, so there was little to clutter it. The angel noticed an old photograph and picked it up. It was Clarence Jones surrounded by his family. What could have happened to them?

The angel saw a blanket in the corner of the room and he carefully covered Clarence with it. Then he sat back down in the broken chair and wondered all night how he would ever accomplish his job.

For Advent reflection:

Jesus preached a message of love for all people for all time. It's easy to love our friends. How should we treat those people who annoy us by their thoughtless behavior or actions?

For further reading:

- 1) The newest angel wanted to become a star. This reference to angel is found in Job 38:7.
- 2) Many stories are told about the accomplishments of the angels. Some of these stories are found in Genesis 18:2-10; Genesis 19:1-22; Genesis 24:7; Daniel 6:22; Luke 1; and Luke 24:4.

1986 soccer all-star named for Catholic boys, girls

The 1986 City-Catholic and Private-Parochial all-star teams were announced last week for Section 5 soccer.

Named on defense for the boys in Division I of the City-Catholic League were Kevin Considine (McQuaid, senior), Armando Inglesse (Edison, senior) and Dan Williams (Bishop Kearney, senior).

Honored midfielders included Mike Cregan (Bishop Kearney, senior), Mike Britton (East, junior), Rob Brunette (Cardinal Mooney, senior), and Dan Gillett (East, junior).

Peter Mojsej (Cardinal Mooney, junior), Gary Barsell (Aquinas, senior) and John Lama (McQuaid, senior) were voted all-star linemen.

Kearney's Cregan was named the player of the year in Division I.

Coach Scott Morrison's Lady Cardinals of

Cardinal Mooney captured the most honors on the girls' all-star squad. Mooney's Sandy Zollo (senior), Theresa and Cathy Nietopski (both seniors), Tracy Schmidt (senior) and Alina Martinez (junior) were all named all-stars, and Teri Lamphorn captured the most valuable player award.

Goalie Donna Enright (senior), CoCo O'Donnell (senior), Christine Querney (senior) and Ann Frederick (junior) were all named

from Coach Mary Beth Moo's Aquinas squad.

Lesley Salladin (junior), Margaret Sawyko (junior), and Ana Perez (junior) were tabbed from Coach Dick Hendrick's Nazareth squad, and Andrea Colaruotolo (junior) and Laura Wambach were chosen from Kathy Boughton's Our Lady of Mercy team.

Angie Madama (senior) was tabbed from Coach Patsy Tata's Bishop Kearney squad.



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