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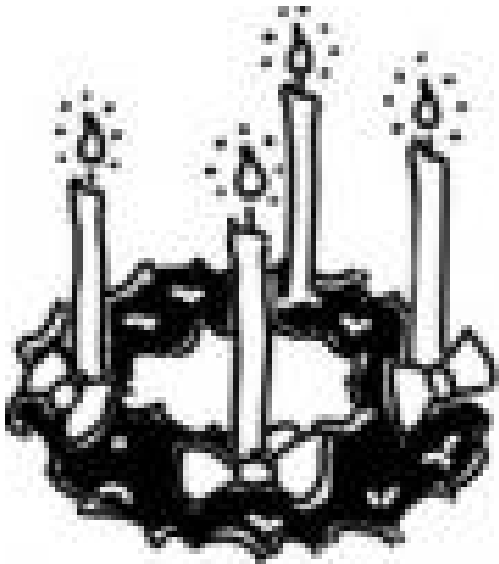
Too busy to be aware of God?

by Joyce Rupp

Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst.
?Zephaniah 3:16-17

Could there be any better time than Advent to focus on and remember that God dwells in our midst? I find it particularly necessary to be aware of God's nearness when I am zooming through December, busy about too many things.

It is easy to get swallowed up by my anxiety or discouragement, knowing that I am unable to do all the planning and preparations I would like to do before Christmas comes.



I draw inspiration and encouragement when I recognize that the

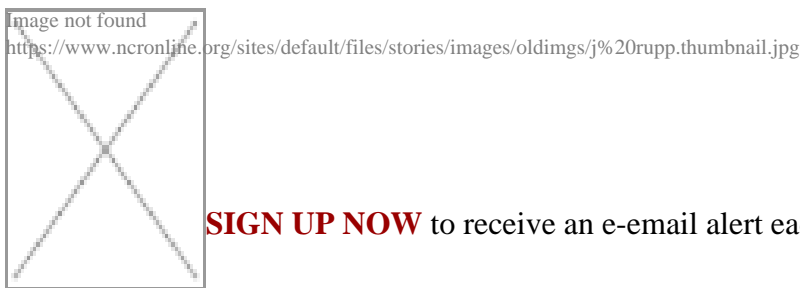
one whose birth I am preparing to celebrate dwells in the midst of all my activities and relationships. I have only to open my inner eyes and recognize the presence of God in the love, joy, care, concern, honesty and peace of those around me.

I also need to be mindful of how God is present in those who have very little joy because of their physical or mental condition, financial deprivation or the violence of their political situation. It is here that I meet the suffering Christ.

Busyness dulls my awareness of the presence of Emmanuel. Excessive attention to material things lessens my bond with God. God is with me, if only I slow down long enough to look and see.

Emmanuel, God-with-us,
let me not be discouraged.
You are in my life.
I will slow down so I can find you there.

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