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A Brothel Christmas Medley



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SUPPORT PLEDGED



THAILAND

A brothel manager of international women sent a message last week: "Thank you for coming to sing and give gifts! All the women were very happy and cannot stop talking about it!" The delight on the women's faces made it a joyful memory for all of NightLight's outreach team. Caroling inside a brothel was the highlight of my otherwise difficult Christmas season here.

Joy and sorrow meet intimately at Christmas. The first Christmas story was immersed in a dark story of governmental power abuses, of exploitation, and of death. Mary and Joseph found themselves far from home, seeking shelter with the hope of new life. It is in the midst of these shadows of darkness that good news came, though few knew it at the time.

This medley of song and joy at the brothel has a countermelody more in tune with the songs surrounding the Christmas drama of two thousand years ago. The women in the brothel live in the shadow of darkness.

Our relationship with this manager has been an unusual one, giving us access to the women and opening the door for assisting them. A few years ago, this manager asked us to assist a young pregnant Central Asian woman. A client had become an abusive and controlling boyfriend dependent on her money for his drug habit. In spite of several attempts to break away, she remained in bondage to him.

This year, this young mother finally made the break, ready to return to her home country with her children. As I write this, however, she sits in a detention center, separated from her children because the immigration officials will not allow them to leave the country together. The complexity and confusion of following red tape trails sometimes blows our minds into a state of blurriness. Everything becomes overwhelming for a moment, and we wonder where God is and what He is doing to help. It has been exasperating as we have been faced with corruption, exploitation, and misuse of the law (which does, in fact, support the mother's rights). We are fighting on her behalf and have hired an attorney to help us reunite her with her children and to help defend her right to return home.

Christmas has become a season known for its beauty, joy, and love. Many of the Christmas images are of light. I think most of us would rather not bring the dark shadows of the Christmas story into our own Christmas stories. But where there is light, there is also a shadow. We cannot really celebrate the purpose of Christ the Savior being born without recognizing the great need for a Savior. We need a Savior, and we need the Light of the world to come into these dark places to bring hope and freedom.

This young Central Asian woman has found Jesus—or rather, He first found her. He came to her twice when she was running from violence and comforted her. After coming to NightLight, she discovered who He is and chose to give her life to him. In her words, "I fell in love with him!" The Light of Christmas shines in her story of darkness. I visited her at the detention center and asked her what she needed there. The first thing she asked for was another Russian Bible to give to a friend inside. The Savior of the World has given her hope to cling to even when the darkness rises against her, and now she is sharing that hope with others who sit in the darkness of the detention center.

The words of the prophet Isaiah thousands of years ago are still relevant today. "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned... For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on forever. The zeal of the Almighty will accomplish this."

We wait for our miracle in this great hope: Our Savior has come!

All of NightLight International in the US and in Thailand wishes all of our supporters a holiday season of joy where there has been sorrow. Light where there is darkness. May the hope of our Christ fill your hearts and homes as this year ends and the new begins!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Blessings,

Annie Dieselberg
Founder and CEO
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