



## **In the beginning was the word and the word became flesh and dwelt among us. John 1:1,14**

by Louise Sandberg

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One of the Mexican families I have been working with for many years had a grandmother named Carmen who practically commuted between Westbury, Long Island, NY and Mexico. She didn't speak a word of English but brought her wisdom to our Latina women's group. She died last year and her family mourned her. ([See April 2014 blog "Success"](#))

Every December for 9 or 10 days we celebrate Posadas at different families' houses. There we re-enact the turning away of Mary and Joseph from the inn until finally a small, poor spot is found. The posada at the home of the Carmen's son, Mario, was different. They welcomed "Maria y Jose" in a big way with a mariachi band! It was also a celebration of their son Francis' birth 25 years ago.

Mario asked me to dance. There was only room for 2 couples in the little kitchen that served as a dance floor. Francis danced with his young wife, and I danced with Mario. Mario seemed a little teary. "I feel like I am dancing with my mother." I understood that I am his mother Carmen's presence in some way.

After the dance I tried to slip away. The birthday boy, Francis, stopped me and asked me to wait. Francis silenced the music and gave a beautiful speech about how I had been there for him. "Luisa has been there for me through many times in my life when I was making difficult choices. I was making wrong choices, destructive choices. The choices I made because of her brought me new life. I have a healthy baby boy and a beautiful wife whom I love. I love my home and my work. I love God and my church. Luisa helped me see I had choices. Without her I would have made the wrong choices. I couldn't see the will of God." He was crying. He embraced me. I was very moved by the honor he was giving me, but I knew all the praise belongs to God. The main reason he asked me to help him at all was because I represent God to him. And I didn't spend a lot of time with him, but when I was with him I listened carefully and prayed with him.

The next night at another house, Carmen's daughter, Lucia, gave a speech in the middle of the intercessory prayer. "Luisa has helped us for many years, honoring our traditions, serving our families and listening to us. We have to thank her for being one of us." Suddenly everyone was clapping. As I was leaving Lucia embraced me, crying, "You are my mother. Whenever I am

with you, I feel her presence. I love you." I called her "hija", daughter, and told her, "I am proud of you. I love you." And in that tearful embrace, heaven and earth met, and God became flesh once again.

I had the wordless insight that my dwelling among the people I serve is what God was asking of me in my service, in my life. What God is calling all of us to. Every day, a new call, a new beginning, a new incarnation of God into the day, the moment. How are we being called to incarnate God into this moment? This place? How is God to dwell here and now? Where is love manifesting through us? Through others? Visible and invisible? As Meister Eckhart said, "We are all called to be mothers of God, for God is always needing to be born."

I am filled with a new gratitude for my small part in lives filled with struggle. I thank God for shining through me and I ask that God remove any blockages, any obstructions, any barriers to your love flowing in me, through me, to others. Help me to grow as Jesus did, in wisdom, age and grace. Help me to be God's mother every day in every situation, every choice, every call to support, to listen, to be God's presence. Thank you, God, for choosing me to serve and love and be loved. As I experienced the embraces of Mario, Francis and Lucia, I experienced the embrace of God.

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