

OVERSHADOWED by Joan, tenant April 27

As a Christian, I am intrigued by a word used often in the Bible..."overshadowed". It is not dark. It is not light. It is "shadowed". As if as a prelude to quicken our senses to be prepared, a foreshadowing of things not yet revealed. I'm drawn to ponder as all of us struggle between our fear of the dark and the exercise of will it takes to keep moving ahead in spite of lack of clarity, or light, with which to encourage confidence, even in the best and the brightest minds among us. As I read scripture, and reflect, I notice how often the word, "Behold" is used. "Behold! Listen up! Pay attention!" Mary with whom, we are told, was "overshadowed by the Holy Spirit", hears the Angel say, to her, "Behold" before revealing to her God's Big Plan which, he adds, will be contingent on her saying "Yes". He proceeds to encourage her, a nice Jewish girl, by answering her questions. He assures her "Don't worry about the men. You just say "yes" and God will take care of the rest. (And we know how that worked). After God prepared the women, (cousins Mary and Elizabeth), Joseph was caught off guard in his sleep, Zechariah made mute, and later in the story, Saul (Paul) is struck down and blinded. It obviously took extreme measures and Divine Patience to convince the guys that there was "something greater here" and they might as well give up and cooperate.

So, what does this all have to do with a pandemic? An invisible force, disguised as a virus, has broken through our resistance, challenged our resources, overshadowed our differences, exposed our limitations, humbled the proud, raised up the brave, and cut through our fear of one another? There is "something greater here". And I would venture it is something we have never quite experienced before. So, let's listen up!

Being overshadowed by mystery, things we do not understand, to risk beyond, to reach out with our hearts, to surrender to grace. Whatever it is, it is becoming evident there is something huge at stake. Left on my own, I would never have chosen transformation. But now, today, I know if I am critically ill, facing death, and look into the eyes of a stranger risking his or her life to save mine, I will never ask their religion or politics.

