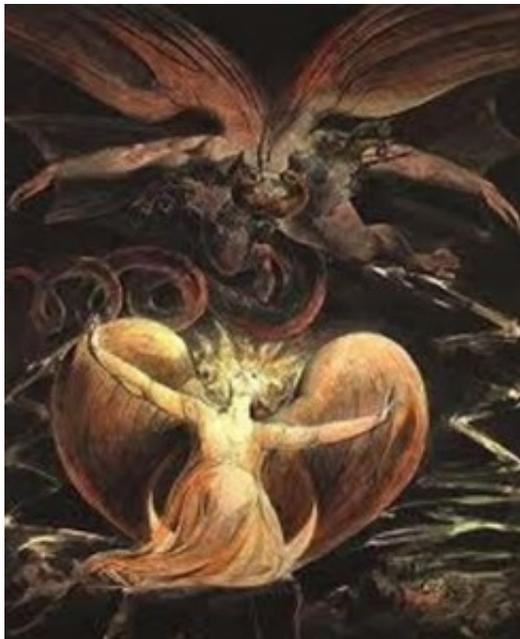


## Courage and Creativity

***‘A woman, clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown to twelve stars on her head...was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth...then an enormous red dragon stood in front of her ...so that it might devour the child the moment it was born...she gave birth to a son ...who was snatched up to God and to His throne...And there was war in heaven.’ (Rev. 12: 1-7)***



Mary believed God. Her consent to bear new life brought forth the Deliverer who delivers us from sin and death. Her ‘yes’ contested hell. Yet in spite of provoking Herod and demons and dragons, Mother and Child created Heaven on earth—Christ the Living Temple--the sole refuge from our chaos and despair.

Creating new life requires faith. Only in surrender to the One under whose shadow we create can we find the courage to bring forth something new and life-giving on the bleak landscape around us. Like Mary, we must be virgin, single-eyed and attentive to only One.

And be prepared to fight for the life emerging in and through us. Like Nehemiah and those he summoned to restore the wall around Jerusalem, we stand as healers, repairing the damage with one hand while fending off the enemies of new life with the other. (Neh. 4: 15-18)

From the start of our married life, Annette and I faced dragons seeking to extinguish our creativity. More than one well-meaning saint warned us against marrying on the ground that this ‘gay’ dude could not pull it off. Over the next 32 years, activists have not ceased accusing us of ‘living a lie.’

Gratefully, Jesus and Mary did not go the distance simply to confirm my faith in the 'truth' of homosexuality! They did so to open wombs and activate loins to bring forth new life. My four amazing kids testify to the fruit of Mary's 'yes': the Deliverer who makes us new in the very depths of our being so that we can offer ourselves to one another in authentically creative ways.

Annette's courage surpasses mine here. She believed God, not only for our children's well-being, but also for many children that might be created from those destined to be 'gay'. Today we are surrounded by those who believed God for more. We know their good lives, made virginal through attentiveness to the One. And we behold their fruitfulness: single lives made pure, marriages restored, sons and daughters born and raised by parents whose integrity was born of their 'yes' to God.

Casualties? Of course: dragons prowl and devour hope by promoting 'gay' as good and beyond God's reach. Like Mary, we smash his head by saying 'yes' to God and the creativity that comes only through faithful surrender to the fruit of her womb.

'Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman, than of her who has a husband,' says the Lord. (Is 54: 1)

'Now have come the salvation and power and kingdom of God...for our accuser has been hurled down. We overcame the dragon by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony.' (Rev. 12: 10, 11)