

**ANGEL IN MY POCKET**  
**Festival Sunday –December 18, 2011 –Luke 2: 8-13 and Ecclesiastes 11: 1**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

The Angel in My Pocket is a small, nickel-sized and colored piece of metal that has an angel on one side and a word inscribed on the other. I carry it with me wherever I go. I honestly forget who first gave it to me but I've carried it with me for years. Over time it has come to symbolize for me the number of angels who watch over me in life –normal people need one or two but I guess I need a lot of them! It symbolizes for me God's watchfulness over me; wherever I go God is with me and God loves me. *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"*, promises Jesus. And for me this represents exactly that in my life.

So you can imagine a number of years ago, when I was going through a particularly stressful time in life and ministry, when I lost the angel in my pocket. The angel had inscribed on its back the word "Strength" and I very much needed strength at that moment in my life. I'm not a superstitious kind of person but the loss of my angel really freaked me out. With it being the size, shape and color of a coin it is easy to lose. I had lost it before and always re-found it. So I searched high and low, in pants pockets, on the floor of my car, down in the cracks of upholstered furniture. I looked everywhere! But no angel. Finally, I went back to an ATM cash machine that sometimes I frequented and looked down and lo and behold there it was on the ground right by the ATM. It was a time of exceedingly great joy. The angel was lost but now it was found. My strength had not left me. God was indeed watching over me. The angel had returned to my pocket.

Now over the years I will tell you that sometimes I have given that angel away to someone else who was going through a difficult time in their own lives. But an amazing thing always happened. Someone else would then be moved to give me another angel in my pocket. So it kept coming back. I think the one I carry now is at least the third iteration of that first angel in my pocket. Or perhaps I'd think I'd lost it but then I'd find it again. It kept coming back. Over and over again over the years it has been lost and it has been re-found countless times.

So back to the ATM machine. So I go home all elated that I have re-found my lost angel. And after a couple of months I am rooting around in a pair of old pants that I only use to work out in the yard and discovered something that felt like an old nickel down in the pocket. I bring it out and, you guessed it, it is my lost angel in my pocket. I take out the newly found angel in my pocket only to discover that the word on the new one is "Hope" and the word on my old angel in my pocket was "Strength". I have TWO angels in my pocket, not just one. God is saying not only "Strength" but also "Hope". Through the tough time in my life I have TWO angels not just one watching over me. So I take the new angel back to the ATM machine where I must now assume someone else had lost it and I carefully place the new angel with "Hope" inscribed on its back next to the ATM. Maybe the person who lost it will find it at just the right time. Or maybe someone who needs a little hope will look down and see it there and place it in their own pocket. Angel in my pocket –you cannot get rid of it. The more you lose it, the more you find it. The more you give it away, the more it comes back to you.

God at that first Christmas sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, into the world. It was His gift of love and hope and strength for the world. *We love because He first loved us. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...* The perfect gift is received but it is received in order to be given away. As we sow so shall we reap. As we give away the perfect gift it keeps coming back to us. We give away strength, and strength returns; we give away Hope and Hope returns; we give away love and love returns. You *"cast your bread upon the water"*, as our scripture says, and it comes back to you.

*(Ecclesiastes 11: 1)* We cannot get rid of it; it keeps finding us over and over again. The more you think you've lost it; the more it returns and you re-find it. The more you give it away, the more it comes back to you.

That's the way the perfect love born into our world that first Christmas really is. That's what the love born in the manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes really is.

**It is the perfect gift.** It is the gift that keeps on giving. It is the gift when you give it away it keeps coming back to you. It is the gift when you think you've lost it you rediscover it and rejoice again. It will never leave us nor forsake us. You cast it upon the waters and it always comes back to you. What goes around comes around. There is no getting away from the love of God.

So this Christmas give the perfect gift –give the hope and the strength and the love born in Bethlehem. And beloved, trust me, like the Angel in My Pocket, it *will* come back to you. Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA  
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*