

Maggie's Christmas

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

Copyright © 2018. The Heart of a Christian Playwright.

All Rights Reserved.

Cleveland O. McLeish/The Heart of a Christian Playwright have asserted the right to be identified as the Author of this work.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the expressed permission of Cleveland O. McLeish. Professional Rights, Amateur Rights, Fringe Rights, and Education Rights are all available through the Heart of a Christian Playwright. Please request permission in writing to cleveland.mcleish@gmail.com. The Author can be reached at cleveland@christianplaywright.org

All rights whatsoever in the play are strictly reserved. Requests to reproduce the text in whole or in part should be addressed to the Publisher/Author.

You have ONE free license to do ONE free Performance with the purchase of this book. You are NOT ALLOWED to make copies of this book, but you can purchase additional copies from Amazon, or you can purchase a digital version from the Website (www.christianplaywright.org) to make printed copies. For multiple performance and/or performances where tickets are sold, or there is an admission cost, please contact us to discuss royalties.

Publication of this play indicates its availability for performance.

ISBN-13: 978-1724535290 (paperback available on amazon.com)

ISBN-10: 1724535293

Published by:

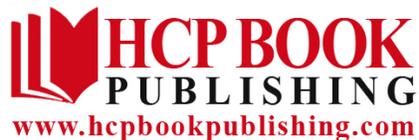


Table of Contents

Characters	4
Setting	5
The Story.....	6
Play Details	7
Scene I.....	9
Scene 2	14
Scene 3	21

Characters

THOMAS: Man, about 35 years old. Popular pastor. Son of Maggie and Grandson to Grandmother.

GRANDMA: Female, about 75 years old. Thomas's Grandmother and Maggie's mother. Spunky. Wise. Intelligent. Strong.

MAGGIE: Thomas's mom, 16 years old. Attitude changes throughout play from troubled teen to responsible parent.

MAN/JESUS/

DOCTOR: Male, late 30's. Three parts played by the same actor. Gives consolation to Maggie and Thomas.

LUCAS: Maggie's boyfriend, father of Thomas. Drug addict and thief. Tries to convince Maggie to abort her baby.

INNKEEPER: Manages hotel where Maggie attempts to stay. Good hearted, but cowardly.

CHURCHGOERS

1 & 2: Women from Thomas's congregation. Early 50's-Late 60's.

Setting

The stage is bare, except for some needed chairs and appropriate props.

The Characters should enter from different parts of the stage.

The Story

After the death of his mother, Thomas is left feeling a bit somber around the holiday season, until his grandmother reveals a story about Christmas Eve when his teenage mother turned her life around.

Play Details

Length: 30-45 Minutes

Cast: 4 Males, 4 Females, Plus Extras (non-speaking roles)

Audience: Teens & Adults

Genre: Contemporary/Biblical Drama

THE SCRIPT



Scene I

LIGHTS UP

Church.

Thomas is standing before his congregation giving a sermon on Christmas morning.

He stands center stage facing audience.

THOMAS: During this time of year, we are often concerned with gifts. We give gifts and receive gifts. We spend hours at shopping malls trying to find the perfect gifts for our loved ones and delight in the faces of our children when they unwrap their presents on Christmas morning. Some of that delight is the joy in getting a gift we've wanted, but other times the gifts we receive are things we didn't even know we needed. The Wise Men followed a star to a Baby in a manger. When they arrived, they gave the Child, a complete stranger, gifts fit for a king. This Child, though the product of humble beginnings, would prove to become the greatest gift humanity has ever received.

Thomas pauses to reflect.

THOMAS: What gifts have you been given? Which ones were you expecting? Which were you surprised by? This week, while we share the joy in giving and receiving, let us remember the spirit behind the season and the gift that was given to us in the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thomas pauses to wipe a tear.

THOMAS: As you may know, one of our most devoted church members, my mother, Maggie, passed this week.

He is having a difficult time holding back the tears.

THOMAS: I believe you will all agree with me when I say she was, without a doubt, a gift to this congregation. Since Christmas was her favorite time of year, it would mean the world to me, if you could please join me in prayer.

He lowers his head.

THOMAS: Heavenly Father, we ask that You bless us as we give thanks for Your one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Allow us to be humble and remember all the gifts we receive, for we know that they are bestowed upon us through Your grace and Your

Maggie's Christmas by Cleveland O. McLeish

mercy. We thank You, Lord, and ask that You help us recognize Your gifts, especially those that we aren't expecting. Amen.

CHURCH GOERS: Amen.

THOMAS: God bless you all and have a wonderful week.

Church Goers approach Thomas at the podium.

CHURCH GOER 1: What a lovely sermon, Pastor. Your mother would have been so proud.

CHURCH GOER 2: What a tragedy. So sudden. She was such a light to this congregation. I still expect to see her sitting there in the front row every Sunday.

Church Goer 1 nudges Church Goer 2.

CHURCH GOER 2: Whaaat.

CHURCH GOER 1: How *are* you doing, pastor? This must be a difficult time for you.

Thomas seems somewhat startled by this comment but regains composure quickly.

THOMAS: Yes, well it has been a bit of a struggle. As you know, mother loved the holiday season, but she is with the Lord right now and is truly ---

He breaks.

GRANDMOTHER (Offstage): --- In a better place.

Grandmother enters. Thomas notices her and seems eager to leave the uncomfortable conversation.

THOMAS: If you'd excuse me. Thank you so much for your concern and condolences and for being here on this glorious day. Merry Christmas.

CHURCH GOER 2: Merry Christmas to you too, pastor. God bless.

Church Goers exit as Thomas walks towards Grandmother and embraces her.

GRANDMOTHER (Smiling): Merry Christmas, darlin'.

THOMAS: Merry Christmas.

GRANDMOTHER: Those ninnies at the nursing home sure did ask a lot of questions about where I was going on Christmas morning. I almost missed the bus, but I am glad I got here in time to hear your sermon today. It always brings me so much joy to hear you speak about God's love.

THOMAS: Thanks, grandma. I know they do ask a lot of questions.

GRANDMOTHER: Tom, you don't even know the half of it. It's been getting on my nerves being asked things every hour of the day. *Where are you going? What are you doing? Where did you put your teeth?* I'll tell you; it drives me near crazy.

THOMAS: Well, I'm so glad you were able to make it out. It's so great to see you. I've been having a little ---

GRANDMOTHER (*interrupting, looking in purse*): Tom, honey, I have something I need you to help me with.

She fumbles through her purse, looking for an item.

GRANDMOTHER: Where is that thing, AHA. (*Pulling out cell phone*) I need some help with this thing. I just can't seem to figure out how to send a --- one of those CON-text messages. Can you show me?

THOMAS: Sure, Grandma. (*She hands him the phone*) See, you press the little message button here, then select who you are sending the message to, then type your message with the keypad, then press "send."

GRANDMOTHER (*overjoyed*): Oh, thank you, honey. You make it look so easy. I'll tell ya, I can't figure out any of these new gadgets. I don't know how you young folks can even press a keyboard that small. You make typewriters look like a sanctuary for these old hands.

THOMAS: Well, you're probably right about that, Grandma. Anyway, I wanted to talk with you a bit about ---

GRANDMOTHER (*Interrupting, looking in purse again*): Oh, Tom, one more thing. Do you think you could ---

THOMAS: --- mom.

GRANDMOTHER (*same time*): --- help me with this iPad thingy?

THOMAS: Grandma, can we do that later. I just ---

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, it'll only take a second. You young folks are so quick with these things—

THOMAS (*Snapping at her, frustrated*): Later, okay!

Pause.

Longer pause.

GRANDMOTHER: Thomas. This doesn't sound like you.

She motions for them to sit in one of the church pews and they sit.

GRANDMOTHER: What's bothering you, darlin'? It's Christmas Day. It's time to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

THOMAS: I know, it's just --- it's the first Christmas Day without mom. I guess I'm just a little upset. I can't believe she's --- gone.

Thomas wipes a tear. Grandma rests her hand on his shoulder.

GRANDMOTHER: I know, honey. I miss her too. But you know what? She's not gone at all. She's still with us. In fact, you sounded just like her just then when you got frustrated. Oh boy, could your mother ever yell. (*Laughing*)

THOMAS: Oh, c'mon, Grandma. Mom was always even-tempered. She never raised her voice in my life.

GRANDMOTHER: Well, maybe not in YOUR life she didn't, but I can tell you, your mom and I had some knock down drag out fights when she was young. Got so bad, we could barely stand in the same room with each other.

THOMAS: Are you sure we're talking about the same person? I thought you guys were really close.

GRANDMOTHER: Thomas, you know people change over the course of their lives, and sometimes it takes a big change to make them want to be different.

Thomas is hanging on Grandma's every word.

GRANDMOTHER: Your mama and I had our differences in the past, but it's never too late to turn your life around and turn to God. Your mama had enough sense to do that, just like the folks out there who come hear your sermons every week. In fact, I remember one Christmas Day when I got the best present of my life. The best present of your mama's life too, I'll bet.

THOMAS: Would you tell me about it?

Maggie's Christmas by Cleveland O. McLeish

GRANDMOTHER: I don't know if you are ready to hear.

Pause.

GRANDMOTHER: But, maybe it is time you did.

LIGHTS FADE

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP

City Street - 1980's

Maggie enters.

She looks as if she hasn't changed her clothes or showered in several days. She has been living on the street. It's Christmas Eve and snowing. She stands on the sidewalk as if she is waiting for someone.

MAGGIE: Excuse me, sir? Do you know what time it is?

She turns to another passerby.

MAGGIE: Spare some change? I need a place to ---

She slowly sits down, defeated.

MAGGIE:--- stay. Merry Christmas? What's so merry about it? I thought Christmas was supposed to be the time of charity and giving to others.

She looks up and speaks to God.

MAGGIE: What do you have to give to me? I'm here. I'm ready to accept anything you have to offer, seriously anything would be better than this.

She's cold, and shivers a bit, standing up.

Lucas enters.

LUCAS: Hey. How's it going over here?

MAGGIE: Not so good. I think everyone is starting to head home for the night. Christmas and all.

LUCAS: Oh yeah. I forgot it was Christmas today. Merry Christmas. I would have gotten you a little present, if I had remembered.

MAGGIE: I'd settle for a warm place to sleep for the night.

LUCAS: Well, you could always call your mom. I'm sure she'd be willing to let you come back home.

MAGGIE: No way. That is NOT happening. I wouldn't give her the satisfaction. God. I can't stand that woman.

LUCAS: Yeah, but c'mon, she's your mom, that counts for something, right?

MAGGIE: No. I'm sick of living with her. I'm done. Besides, I worked hard to get a college scholarship just to get away from her. You really think I'd go crawling back now?

LUCAS: No offense, Mags, but it's not like you DID anything with that scholarship.

MAGGIE: That's not the point. The point is that I don't need her to take care of me. I can take care of myself.

LUCAS: Well, hopefully, you won't be opposed to me taking care of you, just a little?

MAGGIE (*smiling*): For you, I'll make an exception. Since it IS Christmas after all, I've been wanting to tell you something.

LUCAS (*confused, nervous*): Yes?

MAGGIE: I've got a present for you. I'm pregnant.

Lucas is shocked. Doesn't know quite what to say.

LUCAS: Woah, pregnant huh? That wasn't what I was expecting you to say (*He looks very uncomfortable*) Uh, Mags I, uh, a baby? I don't think we can do that right now. I mean, look at where we are. We don't exactly have the kind of cash for a baby now, do we?

MAGGIE: I thought you'd be happy, well, what else can we do? We're having a baby.

LUCAS: Well, Mags, we can't keep it. I'm not ready to be a dad. I've got my business to think about and you. I mean, you don't want to ruin your life and your figure with some snot-nosed brat.

MAGGIE (*shocked*): Lucas, what are you saying?

LUCAS: There's a free clinic not far from here. Let's just get it over with and move on.

MAGGIE: An abortion? You want me to kill our baby?

LUCAS: Now c'mon, Mags, we don't have money. We don't even have a place to live. You wanna bring a kid into all of that?

He clearly wants the conversation to end there and starts to exit.

LUCAS: Look, we can talk about it later, let's just see if we can find someplace to bed down for the night. I'll be back in a while. See ya later.

Lucas exits.

Maggie looks scared, upset, and is clearly still processing how dismissive Lucas was.

She looks up, silently, as if saying a silent prayer, then shivers, convincing herself.

MAGGIE (*unsure*): He's right. (*Convincing herself*) He's right. What would we do with a baby?

HOMELESS MAN enters, stays on the edge of stage.

INNKEEPER enters a moment after on the opposite side of the stage.

Maggie notices them both, but walks towards the Innkeeper and "knocks."

Innkeeper answers.

INNKEEPER: Yes?

MAGGIE: Hi, um, Merry Christmas. I was wondering if you have any rooms available for tonight?

INNKEEPER: Sure do.

MAGGIE (*somewhat relieved*): Great.

INNKEEPER: All I need is your ID and \$54, and we'll get you settled right in.

MAGGIE: Uh well, that's gonna be a little tricky. I was wondering if, well, since it's Christmas and all, if you'd be willing to give me a room for a bit cheaper?

She fumbles through her bag, Innkeeper looks skeptical.

MAGGIE: I mean, I have a little bit of cash on me but not quite that much. I ---

INNKEEPER: Look, sweetie, I really wish I could help, but I really don't want any trouble. It's not easy working Christmas Eve ya know and if my boss found out, let's just say I'd be having a pretty blue Christmas myself. I got kids to feed, ya know.

MAGGIE: Oh, but please. I won't ---

INNKEEPER (*interrupting*): I know it's cold out tonight, but there's a homeless shelter not too far from here. Why don't you see if they have any space over there okay?

MAGGIE (*almost pleading*): No, please ---

INNKEEPER: My hands are tied, kid. I really wish there was more I could do. Good luck to you.

He "closes" the door and exits.

Maggie looks like she's been punched in the stomach and begins to tear up a bit.

HOMELESS MAN notices her crying and begins to approach her.

MAN: You okay?

MAGGIE (*angry, holding back tears*): I'm fine.

MAN: Don't look fine to me.

MAGGIE (*almost yelling*): I said I'm fine, okay.

Man takes a deep breath and tries again.

MAN (*gently*): You wanna talk about it?

MAGGIE (*angry*): Does it look like I want to talk about it? Oh gee, what could I possibly be upset about? It's Christmas Eve, I'm freezing. I've got NO money, and no place to stay and I am pregnant with my first child, whom my boyfriend wants NOTHING to do with, and I don't know what I'm gonna do about it. Okay? Now will you please just leave me alone?

She turns to walk away.

MAN: Uh, yeah. Looks like you have a lot on your plate right now. I'll leave you be.

He turns to walk away, then stops and turns back.

MAN: Um, but before I do, can I just say one thing?

Maggie's Christmas by Cleveland O. McLeish

Maggie is angry and annoyed, but slowly turns around. There is something intriguing about this man, and she wants to interact with him. He chuckles a bit.

MAN: It's funny, you just described the same circumstance the Virgin Mary was in before she gave birth to Christ.

Maggie smiles a bit and relaxes as if she is remembering something she lost.

MAGGIE: I never thought about it that way.

She thinks, then smiles.

MAGGIE: I guess you're right.

MAN: She was pretty scared too, ya know?

MAGGIE: What do you mean?

MAN: Well, imagine being told the baby you are carrying is going to be the Messiah? God's ONLY son? Talk about pressure.

He notices her shivering and removes his blue hoodie, placing it over Maggie's shoulders.

MAGGIE (*chuckling slightly, relaxing*): Yeah.

Her smiles fades, becoming more serious.

MAGGIE: I don't know what to do. Lucas doesn't want this baby but I think having an abortion would be wrong. What if Mary had an abortion?

MAN: Well, aren't you glad she didn't? Look what joy Jesus brought to the world. What love. What inspiration. Messages we still share to this day. Wouldn't it be terrible to deny humanity the blessings God has bestowed upon us?

MAGGIE: You sound just like my mom.

MAN: Your mom is a smart woman then. Is she God-fearing?

MAGGIE: Oh boy, you have no idea. Living with her was terrible. I always felt like I was doing something wrong.

MAN: Did you ever think that she was trying to protect you? To be a good mom? To make sure that you grew up to be a good human being? I guarantee that woman loves you more than life itself. She is probably wondering where you are right now.

Maggie's Christmas by Cleveland O. McLeish

It's Christmas Eve. How many presents do you think she has for you under her tree? And what about you? *(he motions to her belly)* You've got some presents to give to her too. Every mother wants to be a grandmother.

MAGGIE: Are you saying this pregnancy is a gift?

MAN: I'm saying you do not know who that baby is going to be. What they will bring to the world. That baby could be someone who changes the lives of people everywhere. Who shares God's love with the world. Who helps and gives freely to others and shows compassion for each and every human being on this planet. And oh, my dear, what a lucky woman you are to bring that kind of person into existence.

Maggie is visibly moved by this statement, touches her belly.

MAGGIE *(choked up):* Do you really think so?

MAN *(taking her hand, looking into her eyes):* Look, I don't know you, and you don't know me, but I know that baby is destined for great things. The question is: What can YOU do to make sure they get to achieve those things?

MAGGIE *(looking up):* It's starting to snow again.

MAN: Ah, yes. A fresh, unblemished blanket onto the world. Pure and untarnished. A new start, perhaps? See? *(pointing to the ground)* Your footprints are already being covered up. No one cares where you've been. And now that the slate is clean, which direction will you take?

Maggie is silent for a bit, truly taking in everything the Man has said to her.

A calm, serene expression slowly unfolds on her face as we see her make her decision.

She is no longer confused about what needs to be done.

She turns to the Man and gives him a hug. They embrace warmly.

MAGGIE: Thank you.

MAN: You're going to be a great mom. Don't forget, that baby is a miracle.

Maggie walks the opposite direction to where she entered at the start of the scene to a pay phone, grabs the receiver and dials the numbers.

MAGGIE: Mom? It's, it's Maggie. *(she starts crying a bit, smiling)* Yes. It's good to hear your voice too. Merry Christmas. Mom, I want to come home.

Maggie's Christmas by Cleveland O. McLeish

Lucas enters on opposite side of the stage.

Maggie notices him and turns away so he can't see her face.

He approaches the Man who is still sitting on side of stage.

LUCAS: Hey man, have you seen a girl around here? Brownish hair? Kinda rough looking?

MAN: Nope. Haven't seen anyone like that.

Man turns away. Lucas exits.

LIGHTS FADE

Scene 3

LIGHTS UP

Church - Present Day

Thomas and Grandmother are sitting side by side in the pew once again.

THOMAS: Wait, Grandma. How come I've never heard this story before?

GRANDMOTHER: Your mother never wanted to tell you this story because she truly believed she was given a second chance at life. Everything that happened before that moment was wiped clean and became pure, as freshly fallen snow. She was able to forgive herself and allow herself to be forgiven for her mistakes and finally come to embrace God's love. You helped her with that. You were her miracle.

THOMAS: But what about the stuff about my dad. Mom told me he died before I was born.

GRANDMOTHER: He did die, Thomas. A few weeks before she gave birth, your mother heard that he was killed from a drug overdose. But honey, he was gone long before that. Those who turn away from God are dead already.

THOMAS: I can't believe she never told me any of this.

GRANDMOTHER: Thomas, can you blame her? She wanted you to look up to her as an example of how to live your life in accordance with God's plan, and after that day, she did just that. She got a job and worked hard for the rest of her life to make sure that you were supported and cared for.

Grandmother and Thomas freeze as the other half of the stage lights up to reveal Maggie in a hospital bed.

The Doctor is holding baby Thomas.

DOCTOR: Congratulations, it's a boy.

He hands her the baby. She is crying with joy.

MAGGIE: Hello, Thomas. It's so nice to meet you. *(she looks deeply into her newborn baby's eyes)* Oh my, I am so lucky to be your mommy. You are going to do great things.

DOCTOR: He is beautiful. You should be proud.

MAGGIE: I am. *(she realizes she is also proud of herself)* I really am.

Grandmother and Thomas unfreeze on opposite side of the stage.

GRANDMOTHER: I know how hard losing your mother has been for you, Thomas. She was a truly wonderful woman. She was my daughter. She was someone who knew how to live and walk in the footsteps laid out by Christ with her head held high. She was an inspiration. But know this: she did it all for you. You are her legacy. And look at all you've done. You've spread the word of God and shared the wisdom of Christ with so many people and helped lead others back to the path of righteousness. I can't think of anything that would make her happier than continuing to do just that and continuing to walk in those footsteps she took all those years ago. She's still with us, Thomas. She's here, right now.

MAGGIE *(to Doctor):* Where is she? Where's my mom?

Grandmother stands up and walks towards Maggie in the hospital bed.

She now speaks exclusively to her daughter.

GRANDMOTHER: I'm here, honey. I'm here.

Maggie hands her the baby.

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, Maggie. Just look at him. He's got your eyes. What a gift he is.

MAGGIE: I never thought I'd feel this kind of love for anything, mom. I'm so glad. I'm so grateful.

GRANDMOTHER: I know exactly how you feel, sweetie. I remember feeling the same way on the day you were born.

MAGGIE: I love you, mom.

GRANDMOTHER: I love you too.

They exit leaving Thomas alone with his thoughts.

Thomas remains and slowly makes his way to center stage.

He looks confused, thoughtful, and a bit sad.

He addresses the audience but uses the space of the entire stage as he speaks, pacing slightly.

THOMAS: Can you hear me, mom? Are you here? I have so many questions I need to ask, and there's no way to know who you really were. I know the past is where we need to have been to be where we are, but why lie about it? No mention of where I came from? That I was a mistake? That my father didn't want me? That you didn't either? Why am I here?

Thomas looks up to heaven.

THOMAS: God, why did You bring me here? Would she have rather lived a different life? She was so young, so different. Why did she choose me? Why give up her life to raise me? Why am I here? For ten years I've been trying to live by Your Word. I've been trying to trust. To put my life on Your hands, but how can I trust anyone when my own mother couldn't be truthful about who she was and where I began? The woman who raised me was not the girl who gave birth to me. How did she change? Why did she want to? I believe You put us all here for a reason, but why am I reason enough for a 16-year-old girl to give up chances and opportunities and her youth to raise a son by herself?

Thomas sits dejected.

THOMAS: I'm nothing special. I'm just trying to follow You and be guided. To let go of my own judgments and submit completely to Your will, but I have so many questions.

He gets up and starts pacing.

THOMAS: It's so hard to surrender. To let go of that questioning. To let go of her. I miss her so much. Why did You take her? Why, when I didn't even know these things about her? Why did You take her when there was so much I still needed to know? What made her a mother? When do women become mothers? Is it when they give birth? Is it when they find out they're with child? When they raise children? I never told her I loved her enough. I'll never get to tell her again. I never got to say goodbye. I was a terrible son. I've said some terrible things to her. If I had known what she gave up, I never would have wanted to be here. I ---

He realizes the negative thinking and pauses for a minute to collect his thoughts. He looks up, speaking to God.

THOMAS: Lord, forgive me. I know I should never question too much. I should be grateful for my life. To be here to serve You and help others see the light. I know Your plan is absolute. That there is always a reason. I just can't ---

He pauses as if he is remembering something.

LIGHTS COME UP on a Manger scene behind him. Mary is holding her newborn son. Joseph proudly kneels beside them.

THOMAS: How did the mother of Christ feel when she was told she was going to give birth to the Messiah? This miracle was unplanned, but she accepted it as God's will.

LIGHTS UP on MAGGIE holding her baby.

THOMAS: --- just like my mother. She turned to You, Lord. She understood how lucky she was to be a mother and bring life unto this earth. I wish I knew what Your plan was, but I honor the fact that I don't. I understand that we do not always get to choose what happens in our lives, and sometimes You show the force of Your hand. My mother did not choose when she would give life, nor did I know when her life would end, but we honor the lessons You are teaching us by understanding our ignorance and rising to the occasion of our own discovery of where we need to be and the lives You want us to live.

He smiles, as if remembering.

THOMAS: I just remembered something I heard in Sunday School once. "*Mary's greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God and not herself.*" She chose to humble herself and stand in the background for the sake of her Son to shine and become who He was. Is that what MY mother did? Forgive herself and step into the light without a second thought of where she could have gone had she not given birth to me? I have no children of my own. How could I ever know what sort of sacrifice that was?

Maggie comes over and stands next to her grown son.

They both look out towards the audience as they speak.

MAGGIE: It was not sacrifice. You were such a wonderful child.

THOMAS: All my life, she told me I was special.

MAGGIE: You were always so special.

THOMAS: But it was her that was the light that shone for our community.

MAGGIE: You were the light that made me smile every single day.

THOMAS: It was her that led the prayer meetings.

MAGGIE: I prayed every night that you would also know God and follow the teachings of Christ.

THOMAS: That collected food for the homeless.

MAGGIE: To never forget to help the needy.

THOMAS: That supported everyone through times of hardship and crisis.

MAGGIE: That you would care for others and help them when they needed it.

THOMAS: Why was she taken from us too soon?

MAGGIE: I will always be here, Thomas. I will always be here for you.

THOMAS: Why am I still here?

MAGGIE: The greatest thing I ever did was be your mother.

Maggie exits.

Thomas is now standing at her funeral, giving the sermon. The scenes behind him fade out.

THOMAS: I will not remember her the way my grandmother does: that scared 16 year old, full of fire and confusion. I'll only remember her as the pillar for us all, with a quiet strength that didn't need to move mountains to feel. I came to understand Christ through her. To see the wonder of God through her eyes; for she saw the love of Christ everywhere. How am I supposed to see now? How are we all supposed to see that love without the heart of this community that beat so strong and bright?

Pause to reflect.

THOMAS: Sometimes, it feels like I see everything through a block of ice. I can't feel the warmth of those around me. I want to feel that warmth again. I want to be the legacy she left behind. To stand strong for this flock so we can continue to walk in the path of righteousness. I know you loved her as I did, and I am sorry if I have not been strong enough this last week. I am also still learning to trust God's plan and realize now that I should be grateful for all the wonderful memories and the joyous life we shared with her. It is during this time of year that we are reminded of the miracle of birth and the holy occupation of motherhood. I personally am reminded of the words of Saint Ildephonus who said "*No one will ever be the servant of the son, without serving the mother.*" I hope I can make my mother proud by continuing to live my life the way she showed me was the right way to live. To show you all that this woman left a legacy through me that will continue as I speak to you all the words of God and the understanding of acceptance of what life gives to us. Every event, whether painful or joyous, is indeed a gift just waiting for us to receive.

BLACKOUT