



The Messiah Is One Of Us , by Megan McKenna

Once upon a time there was a wise abbot of a monastery who was the friend of an equally wise rabbi. This was in the old country, long ago, when times were always hard, but just then they were even worse. The abbot's community was dwindling, and the faith life of his monks was fearful, weak and anxious. He went to his friend and wept. His friend, the Rabbi, comforted him, and said "there is something you need to know, my brother. We have long known in the Jewish community that the Messiah is one of you."

"What," exclaimed the abbot, "the Messiah is one of us? How can this be?"

But the Rabbi insisted that it was so, and the abbot went back to his monastery wondering and praying, comforted and excited. Once back in the monastery, he would pass by a monk and wonder if he was the one. Sitting in chapel, praying, he would hear a voice and look intently at a face and wonder, is he the one. The abbot had always been kind, but now began to treat all of his brothers with profound kindness and awe, ever deeper respect, even reverence. Soon everyone noticed. One of the other brothers came to him and asked him what had happened to him.

After some coaxing, the abbot told him what the rabbi had said. Soon the other monk was looking at his brothers differently, with deeper respect and wondering. Word spread quickly: the Messiah is one of us. The monastery was suddenly full of life, worship, love and grace. The prayer life was rich and passionate, devoted, [...] and services were alive and vibrant. Soon the surrounding villagers came to the services, listening and watching intently, and many joined the community of monks. After their novitiate, when they took their vows, they were told the mystery, the truth that their life was based upon, the source of their strength, the richness of their life together: The Messiah is one of us.

The monastery grew and expanded into house after house, and the monks grew in wisdom and grace before each other and in the eyes of God. And they say still, that if you stumble across this place where there is life and hope and kindness and graciousness, that the secret is the same: The Messiah is one of us.