

Community-Developed

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On the Road to Bethlehem **Joseph's Perspective**

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

Reading:

We've been walking for quite some time now, Mary and I have.
The donkey's getting pretty old by now.
We do this every year, you know.
"Alle Jahre wieder", as they say in German.

The roads continue to be pretty rough, although there's much more pavement these days.
I must say, they clear the roads quite nicely around here.
Can't say that for every road we take.
Landmines are the worst, you know.

Our good friend St Nikolaus has similar issues.
Except he just stops at houses with chimneys.
With chimneys! Good God. Mary and I are just looking for a roof!
And it's not for our reindeer either, or the donkey.

And it's the same story, every year. I'm sure you've heard it.

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. . . . And Joseph also went up from Galilee unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

We've tried all the places listed in the CAA book. Best Western, Super 8, . . . Nothing.
Recently we've tried AIRB&B as well. No luck when they see our picture.

That's why we're here, asking you if you might have a spare room.
It doesn't have to be fancy.
I know, you've got family coming for Christmas and all that.

What about your garage - we're just looking for a roof over our heads.
Although it would be nice if the garage were heated.

Oh, and one more thing. It's, um. . . , it's Mary's condition.

Obviously, not a secret! Not anymore, anyway.

The due date is. . . , well. . . , very soon.

Sooo, a crib would be nice. Again, nothing fancy.

I know, I know, you've only got the one pack-and-play, and you've got grandkids coming.

So, just something simple will do, maybe . . . like, a manger.

Yeah, I know, you haven't seen a manger since growing up in Neubergthal.

But, hey, I'm a carpenter, by Joseph.

So, here's what you do:

take two pieces of 2x4, about 3 feet long and cross them, like this, cross-like.

(Cross arms, with hands outstretched.)

Then you nail 'em together.

Make sure you nail them well, because you sure don't want the nails to impale the child.

That's all you really need to hold the child. Just your arms, to begin with.

Hold her gently.

Gently.

Motherly.

Your arms; a little child.

Helpless and hungry.

You will need to feed him.

But there is enough food, for everyone, if we share it around.

That's also your job.

Oh, and she needs clean air to breathe.

Clean air. . . , can you see to that?

He'll be walking soon, running, actually.

Remember those landmines? They've got to go.

And the barbed wire, and the walls, the walls.

And then there are the missiles and the bombs,

the hate and prejudice,

the greed and the poverty.

O God, how will this child live?

Mary and I have to go now.

We leave you with the child.

Care for him.

Nurture her.

They say it takes a village to raise one. A global one, I should think.

Oh, you ask what child is this?

The holy child of Bethlehem.

You're welcome.

Merry Christmas.

Hymn: Helpless and Hungry / What Child is This