



Growing Faith

08 - Christmas | 15 December 2021

A thought for Christmas

Written by Father Jordan:

It is almost that time, that most magical of times – Christmas. It brings joy and happiness to all and is one of the most celebrated, if not the most celebrated, events in the year. Christmas trees go up, carols are to be heard on every corner, mince pies eaten like there will be a shortage... There are things which we do year in, year out. I for one am already looking forward to spending time with family and cooking a traditional Christmas lunch for them, it should be wonderful. Time spent with loved ones is so valuable.

However, Christmas is not always so easy is it! There is often to be travelling between families, houses and it can become quite stressful. Travelling usually is. Of course the reason for all the celebrating is because of the birth of a little baby boy, in a stable in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph had to travel too of course, no comfy home or hospital for Jesus to be born into, but a manger. Imagine travelling 80 miles, taking the best part of a week, on the back of a donkey, to then only be able to stay in the hut round the back of the hotel. It is not my idea of a holiday, and certainly not over an important season!

But unfortunately, that is the reality for many in the world at the moment. There are estimated to be a staggering 26 million refugees in the world, right now, today. Twenty-Six Million. All of whom have left their homes, all of whom will be stressed, and tired beyond our wildest imaginations. There will be no comforting turkey or sprouts for them this Christmas.

Usually, if we are planning a journey, we make sure that we're equipped and in the best health possible. We take money, suitable clothes and probably something to snack on. If we're not feeling well, we might postpone the trip. This is not the case for many people today. Whole families - grandparents, young children, parents with babies strapped to their backs - travel across unfamiliar territory, sleep beneath makeshift shelters and hope for what little food is available. Inflatable boats are swamped by the overcrowded passengers. Governments turn many back as they reach the shore or border of what they hoped was the Promised Land. The weak and vulnerable succumb to fatigue, illness and exploitation.

Joseph and Mary were by no means unique in their trip, yet theirs is a sanitized version of such a journey. Their journey has a happy ending, a birth that would come to change the history of the world for the better. But it was for us all, every single one of us, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He brings hope, justice, freedom and love to each of us.

Christmas may not always be for us the picture postcard white scene that we often dream of, but it is always a reason to rejoice with each other, and with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I pray that no matter our circumstances this year, we may look to the needs of others, not just our own wants and desires. That we may join as one community in celebrating the birth of the one who, through his death and resurrection, shares his perfect love with us this Christmas time and always.



Teenage Tip

By Joseph Worrall (Year 8)

Our God is all-knowing, all-powerful God.

There is nothing that has happened or will happen in our lives that takes Him by surprise. Even if you doubt, he still has all the answers. Trust God with your present and future today.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3: 5-6

A Prayer

By Josh, Pais Burnley:

Heavenly father,

Thank you for sending your son Jesus into this world to bring us joy and hope. Thank you that because of this you brought light into the darkness, you are good and we thank you for what you've done for us. Please guide us and bless us this Christmas season and let us focus on you lord.

In Jesus name,

Amen

“But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

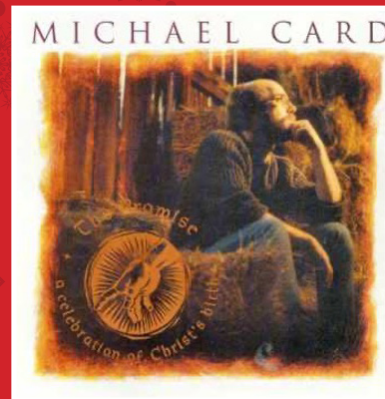
Luke 2:10

Song for the Reflection



School Song

Why not sing along to 'Immanuel' as we worship together.



Church Support

Church Services

Please visit these church websites to see when their services are taking place:

Great Harwood Christian Fellowship: [Website](#)

St John's and St Augustine's Church, Huncoat: [YouTube channel](#)

St Peter and St Paul's Church, Rishton: [Facebook Page](#)

St. John's Church, Baxenden: [Website](#)

Peel Street Baptist Church: [Website](#)

All Saints Church, Clayton-le-Moors: [Facebook Page](#)

St James' Church, Clitheroe: [Website](#)

Burnley Life Church: [Website](#)

St Mary Magdalen's Church, Accrington: [Website](#) / [Facebook Page](#)

St Andrew's Church, Accrington: [Website](#)

St Peter's Church, Accrington: [Website](#)



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