



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Thursday, 25th December 2025

The Christmas story is one of great faith and trust and hope that the saviour will come to us and bring us peace and joy in our hearts, in our lives and in our world.

Mary did not fully know what the message of the Angel meant for her life. But she was joyful and glad and looked forward in faith with a joyful and expectant trust.

Joseph too had difficulty in dealing with the news of Mary's expecting. Yet God granted him the vision to see God's hand at work in this and was reassured that he should take Mary as his wife. Both affirmed that they would accede and follow God's way for them.

Their journey to Bethlehem and their subsequent flight into Egypt was filled with uncertainties and a certain trepidation but they rose to the challenge and answered their calling.

I suppose it was the event of life, the King's command for the census to be taken, that brought them to Bethlehem in fulfilment of the prophecies. God works in mysterious ways and indeed through the events of life and through the unlikeliest people. But they (Mary & Joseph) had faith and trust in God's word and in His providence and in each other. They safely made their strenuous journey to Bethlehem and were provided, by the compassion of an innkeeper, with a quiet place to rest and give birth to the Christ-Child.

Today too, the world at large is full of uncertainties. Many peoples live with many trepidations and fears. Even in our own lives we too are accustomed to limitations and not being able to see beyond our limited horizons. Our lives too are in a sense intrinsically uncertain.

Yet as human beings we are made with an optimistic spirit that is the fundamental core of what drives us forward. As Christians we are galvanized by our Baptism to faith and a hope in the mission we are charged with, to spread the good news with joy and peace and the hope that it brings for a better world.

In this parish, especially this last year, we have been asked to help in many ways, not knowing how it will turn out. But with prayerful confidence taking each step because we know it is the right one, but not knowing exactly where it will lead or how long the journey will take or what we might encounter along the way. Yet we are a pilgrim people, who live with an awareness of God's presence among us, and with such faith are able to take the next step, and are able to step into a future that may seem uncertain but we have a confident trust and hope in God's providence.

This Christmas and into the New Year please continue to pray for the endeavours we have embarked upon this year with our New Hall, with the Pastoral Leadership Team, with the Dementia Support Group Wednesday Café as well as all our other outreach initiatives and activities, the London & Slough Run, the Furniture Market, the St Vincent de Paul, Tea and a Chat, Tea in the Pot to name but a few. Pray also for all those who help and volunteer in so many ways to run and make this parish the vibrant community it is. Pray also for St Joseph's School as they help guide our future generation into a hopeful future. I also commend to you the prayer below by J H Newman.

Together with all our Carmelite Community we pray for you all and may God bless you and keep you this Christmas and into the New Year.

Fr Bob Davies on behalf of all the Carmelite Fathers.

LEAD KINDLY LIGHT PRAYER

Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom,

Lead thou me on;

The night dark, and I am far from home;

Lead thou me on.

Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see

The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that thou

Shouldst lead me on;

I loved to chose my path; but now

Lead thou me on.

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long thy power hath blest me, sure it still
will lead me on,

o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torent, till
the night is gone,

and with the morn those angel faces smile,
which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

J H Newman

