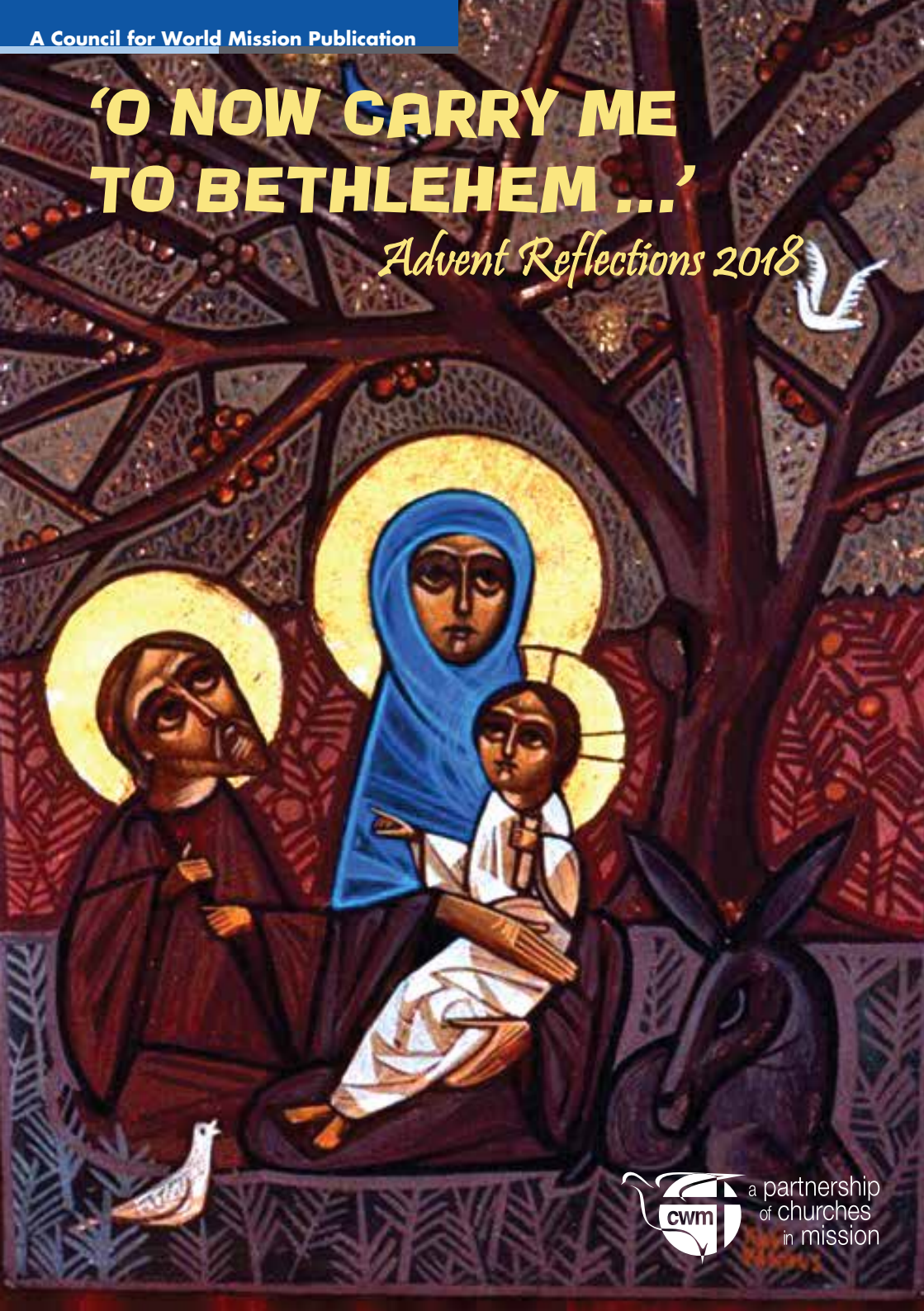


'O NOW CARRY ME TO BETHLEHEM ...'

Advent Reflections 2018



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These Advent reflections focus on the issue of Human Trafficking. We will read the genealogies of Jesus through the Sundays Leading to Christmas and find how trafficking featured in the family history and story of Jesus. The reflections include the Lighting of an advent candle each Sunday through Advent.

There are two different genealogies for Jesus, one in Matthew the other in Luke:

An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3 and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, 4 and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of King David.



And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, 7 and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, 8 and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, 9 and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, 10 and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, 11 and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

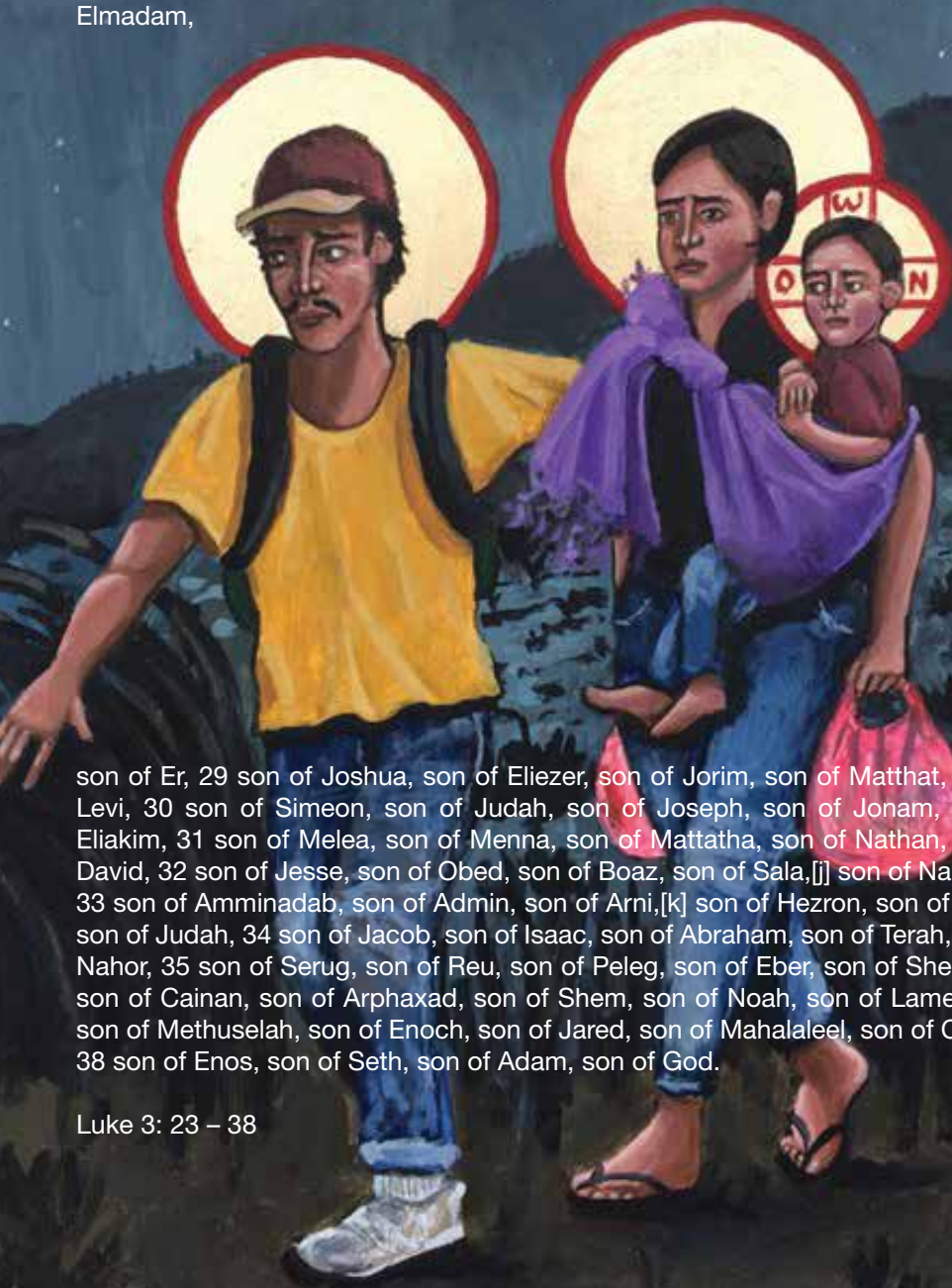


Image via <https://goodquestionblog.com/2014/07/10/how-long-did-jesus-live-in-egypt/>

12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, 13 and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, 14 and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, 15 and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, 16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Matthew 1: 1-16.

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, 24 son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Jannai, son of Joseph, 25 son of Mattathias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Esli, son of Naggai, 26 son of Maath, son of Mattathias, son of Semein, son of Josech, son of Joda, 27 son of Joanan, son of Rhesa, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel,[j] son of Neri, 28 son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosam, son of Elmadam,



son of Er, 29 son of Joshua, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Matthat, son of Levi, 30 son of Simeon, son of Judah, son of Joseph, son of Jonam, son of Eliakim, 31 son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David, 32 son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala,[j] son of Nahshon, 33 son of Amminadab, son of Admin, son of Arni,[k] son of Hezron, son of Perez, son of Judah, 34 son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Terah, son of Nahor, 35 son of Serug, son of Reu, son of Peleg, son of Eber, son of Shelah, 36 son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, son of Lamech, 37 son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, 38 son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

Luke 3: 23 – 38

Advent 1

Son of Noah (Luke 3:36)

Sung or Said:

Oh, now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to folk;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The prince of glory when he came.
(Refrain from the Calypso Carol)

We are journeying to Bethlehem together. Each stage is marked out in light and an unfolding story of pain and shame in the holy Family. As Mary and Joseph make plans to leave home because of the invading Empire we see that travelling and trafficking has been part of their family story from the beginning.

*And Noah said: 'Cursed be Canaan;
lowest of slaves shall he be to his
brothers.'*

*26 He also said, 'Blessed by the Lord
my God be Shem; and let Canaan be
his slave.'*

*27 May God make space for [b]
Japheth, and let him live in the tents of
Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.'*

Gen 9: 25 – 27





Artwork by Halmoni, PCK

Noah's curse is a reminder that Trafficking is a product of patriarchal violence. The people who are trafficked are those whose race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation render them as acceptable victims in their society. Their lives and bodies can be traded and trafficked because they are not seen as important or even as human as the dominant groups in their culture. Trafficking is trading in human bodies whose 'being' is doubted or cursed, like Noah cursed Canaan.

The first Advent candle is lit

Let this light shine for those,
who seeking the blessing of work or
peace,
left home and family
and found themselves tricked and
despised and trafficked.

Quiet is kept

We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk to Christ.
We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk for life.
We are people on a journey
But its end is not in sight.
We are people on a journey
Marching for justice,
Singing for harmony
Giving out a little light

Advent 2

Son of Jacob

Sung or Said:

Oh, now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to folk;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The prince of glory when he came.
(Refrain from the Calypso Carol)

We are journeying to Bethlehem together. Each stage is marked out in light and an unfolding story of pain and shame in the holy Family. As Mary and Joseph make plans to leave home because of the invading Empire we see that travelling and trafficking has been part of their family story from the beginning.

Then Judah said to his brothers, 'What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.' And his brothers agreed. 28 When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.
Gen 37: 26-28



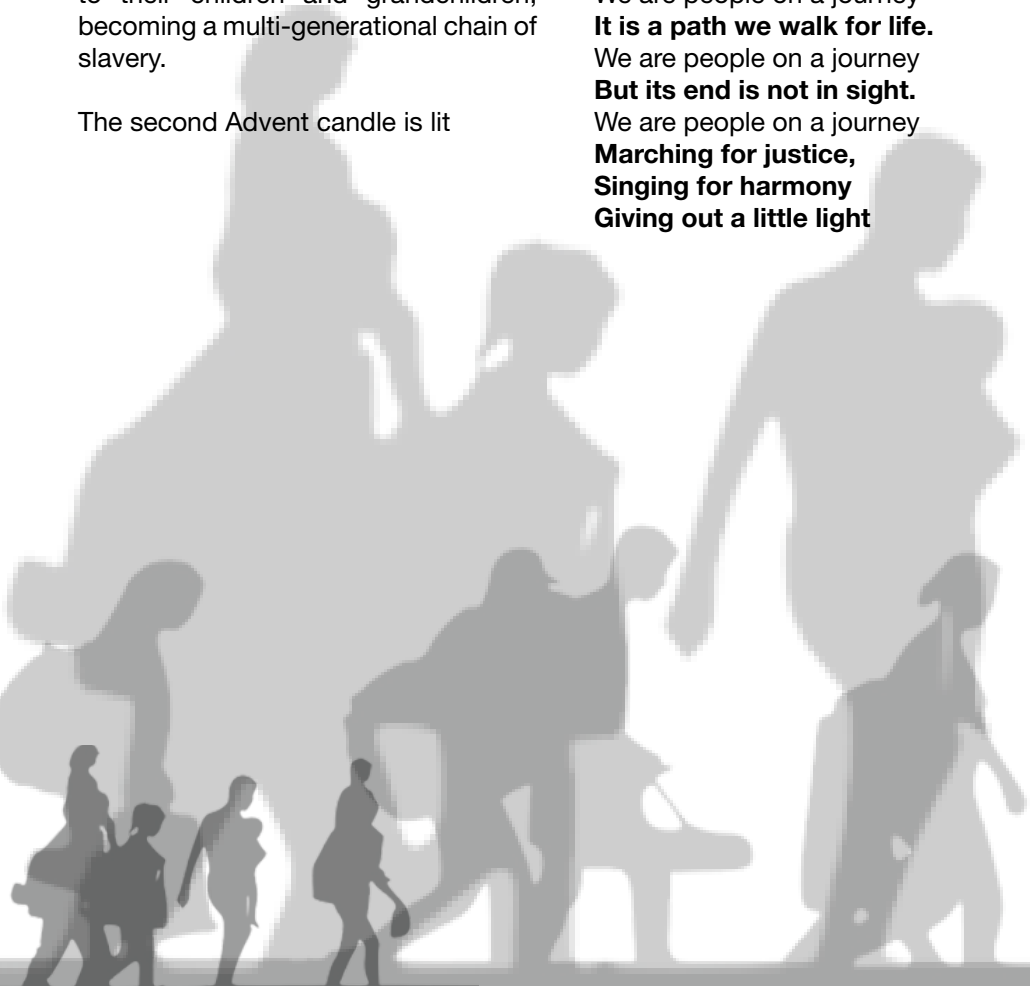
The story of Jesus includes the story of Joseph, son of Jacob, one who was enslaved and trafficked at the hands of his own family into Egypt. Family selling the youngest into bondage is yet another shameful and horrific part of the modern-day practice of trafficking. More than Fourteen million modern-day slaves live in India. Many of these people are “debt-slaves”, meaning that people in debt are forced to work to pay off their debt. It extends to their children and grandchildren, becoming a multi-generational chain of slavery.

The second Advent candle is lit

Let this light shine for those, like Joseph,
Who are beaten by family and sold into slavery
because poverty is so deep
and the rich so strong:
they had no choice or protection

Quiet is kept

We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk to Christ.
We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk for life.
We are people on a journey
But its end is not in sight.
We are people on a journey
Marching for justice,
Singing for harmony
Giving out a little light



Advent 3

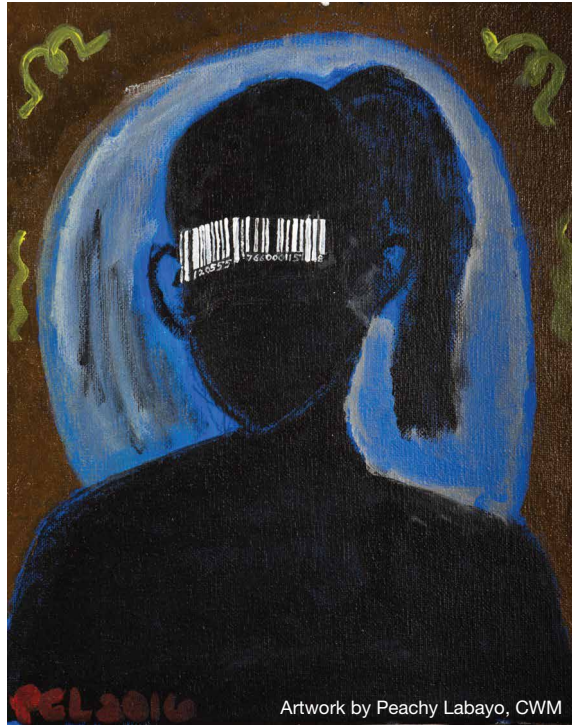
Salmon the Father of Bo'az by Rahab (Matthew 1:5)

Sung or Said:

Oh, now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to folk;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The prince of glory when he came.
(Refrain from the Calypso Carol)

We are journeying to Bethlehem together. Each stage is marked out in light and an unfolding story of pain and shame in the holy Family. As Mary and Joseph make plans to leave home because of the invading Empire we see that travelling and trafficking has been part of their family story from the beginning.

Then Joshua son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, 'Go, view the land, especially Jericho.' So, they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and spent the night there.
Joshua 2:1



Artwork by Peachy Labayo, CWM

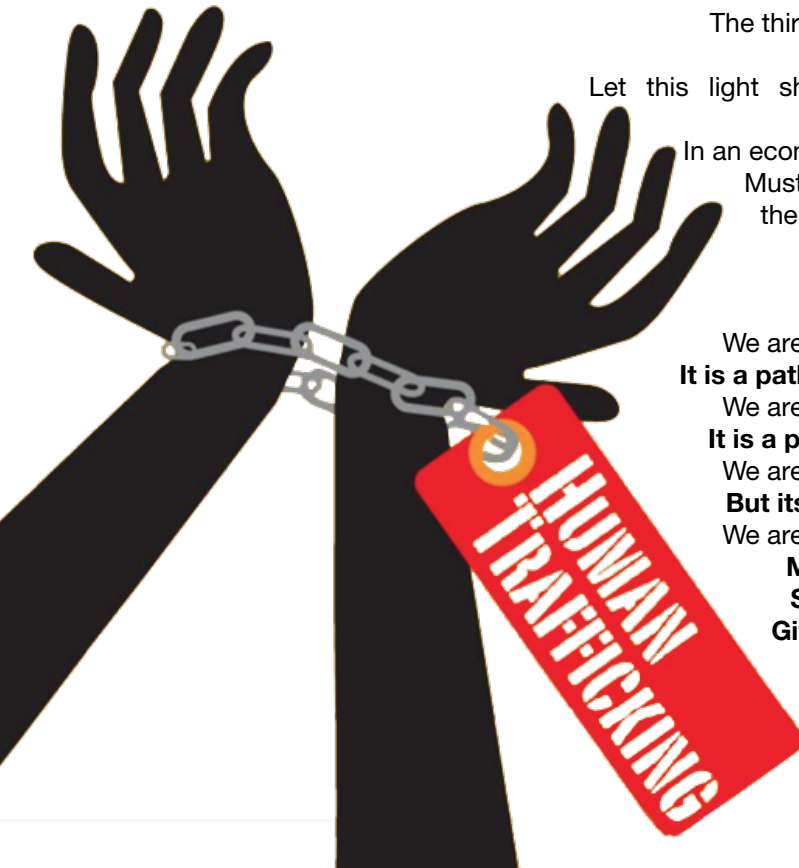
The pedigree of Jesus includes a sex worker. Rahab the Canaanite, prostitute of Jericho, appears in Joshua 2 and 6. She imperils herself to save her family, by saving the men who had taken advantage of her services for the night. At the fall of Jericho, she is carried off by the triumphant Israelites. The reasons for her work are not explained. But, she was not loyal to the city where she was working, which suggests her roots were not there. Like many, perhaps, she had been brought to a city for the pleasure of men like the Hebrew soldiers she entertained for a night. Sex trafficking accounts for over 4 million of trafficked people in the world: Women, children and men to be used for the pleasure of conquest and domination.

The third Advent candle is lit

Let this light shine for those, like
Rahab,
In an economy where sex sells
Must offer their bodies as
the playthings of others.

Quiet is kept

We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk to Christ.
We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk for life.
We are people on a journey
But its end is not in sight.
We are people on a journey
**Marching for justice,
Singing for harmony
Giving out a little light**



Advent 4

The Father of Obed by Ruth

Sung or Said:

Oh, now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to folk;
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The prince of glory when he came.
(Refrain from the Calypso Carol)

We are journeying to Bethlehem together. Each stage is marked out in light and an unfolding story of pain and shame in the holy Family. As Mary and Joseph make plans to leave home because of the invading Empire we see that travelling and trafficking has been part of their family story from the beginning.

When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, 'Is this Naomi?' 20 She said to them, 'Call me no longer Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty; why call me Naomi when the Lord has dealt harshly with me, and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?' 22 So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest
Ruth 1: 19 – 22





'Economic migrants coming here taking away our jobs ...' This has become a familiar refrain in many of our nations. Ruth, one such 'economic migrant', is also one of Jesus' ancestors. And she even comes to the town of his birth, Bethlehem, in search of hope and a future. She is brought there by Naomi, her mother in law, who makes Ruth go and work in the fields, and even make herself sexually available to Boaz, her kinsman. Ruth's powerful and courageous vulnerability models that of another visitor to Bethlehem, Jesus himself.

The fourth Advent candle is lit

Let this light shine for those, like Ruth who seeking the blessing of bread, work or peace,
left home and family
because they had no choice or protection

Quiet is kept

We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk to Christ.
We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk for life.
We are people on a journey
But its end is not in sight.
We are people on a journey
Marching for justice,
Singing for harmony
Giving out a little light

Christmas Day

Sung or Said:

Oh, now carry me to Bethlehem
to see the Lord appear to [men];
Just as poor as was the stable then,
The prince of glory when he came.
(Refrain from the Calypso Carol)

We have journeyed to Bethlehem together. We have passed through stages marked out in light and an unfolding story of pain and shame in the holy Family. As Mary and Joseph make plans to leave Bethlehem because of the violent jealousy of their own king we see that travelling and trafficking has been part of their family story from the beginning.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' 14 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod.

Matt 2: 13-15



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The Story of a Refugee Family
from the Middle East.

oly night
silent
night



And so, Jesus becomes one of the desperate migrants we are used to seeing in so many places. All escaping political violence and persecution. At the border with Egypt no doubt Joseph had to find someone to smuggle them across the border. There they lived as foreigners, with Joseph doing all he could to keep his family safe. They would have absolutely no chance of welcome, sanctuary or work now if they tried to escape to many of the places where we live. Officials or thugs would happily drive them back, the media approve and churches stay silent, and the Holy Son of God could easily wash up on a beach lifeless wearing one shoe.

The Christmas candle is lit

Let this light shine in wonder and welcome

To all who come seeking shelter here
Let us be bright with the light of Christ
in offering love and sanctuary
in his name.

Quiet is kept

We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk with Christ.
We are people on a journey
It is a path we walk to life.
We are people on a journey
But its end is not in sight.
We are people on a journey
Marching for justice,
Singing for harmony
Giving out a little light



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