

## Mary (Day 1)

### Mary's Lullaby

by Jan Underwood

Lullaby, Lullaby, my little one.  
Lullaby, my child so dear.  
Thy precious life has just begun;  
Thy mother holds thee near.

While Joseph watches through the night,  
A star reflects thy radiant light.

Lullaby, lullaby, my little one.  
Lullaby, my child so dear.

Thy gentle head shall wear a crown,  
For thy Father is the King.  
Thy tender hands, so tiny now,  
Have blessings great to bring.

Let all creation join my song,  
For peace and love are born  
Lullaby, lullaby, my little one.  
Lullaby, my child so dear.

## Joseph (Day 2)

### When Joseph Went to Bethlehem

by Bessie Sanders Spencer

When Joseph went to Bethlehem,  
I think he took great care  
To place his tools and close his shop  
And leave no shavings there.

He urged the donkey forward then,  
With Mary on its back,  
And carried bread and goat cheese  
in a little linen sack.

I think there at the busy inn  
That he was meek and mild  
And awed to be the guardian  
of Mary's sacred child.

Perhaps all through the chilly hours  
He smoothed the swaddling bands,  
And Jesus felt the quiet strength  
of Joseph's gentle hands.

And close beside the manger bed,  
He dimmed the lantern's light  
And held the little Jesus  
Close up on that holy night.

## Angel (Day 3)

**Read from Luke 1: 26-31**

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

## Donkey (Day 4)

**Mary's Journey:** The black and silver sky bends over us like the dome of a shining temple. Far in the East a lone star gleams with a peculiar intensity. I watch it as Joseph adjusts the pack on this donkey.

"We must hurry if we are to be off before day breaks," he says. It will be a long journey to Bethlehem where Joseph must pay his tax. Five, even six days. What I fear most is that my child may be born on the cold, lonely road. My time is so very near.

As Joseph lifts me upon the donkey's back, I cannot ignore the sudden rush of fears. The donkey's hoofs ring hollow on the cobbled street. Oh stop! I want to cry out. Let me remain here in my safe bed. Here, where I can deliver this child while surrounded by my mother and my aunts,. But Joseph and I plod on, silent shadow in the fading night moving as though in a dream.

At the edge of Nazareth where the stone street gives way to dirt, I turn and look back. Some how I know that nothing will ever be the same again...the journey has begun. I watch Joseph's sure hand tug the little donkey forward into the darkness. I am struck by the simple thought, Are we not led by God as surely as Joseph leads the donkey? Now the sound of the donkey's hoofs on the road does not seem as lonely, nor does the dark distance seem as ready to swallow us up. This is not a journey of uncertainty; it is a journey of faith.

## Stable (Day 5)

Think about Bethlehem. Think of the busy streets filled with people trying to find a place to stay for the night. Joseph and Mary have finally made it to this little Judeans town, but where can they stay?

Inside, the inn buzzed with laughter and chatter. Distant relatives who had not seen each other in years renewed family ties over bowls of hot soup and goblets of wine. They broke bread together, swapping stories of their journeys. A teenage boy strummed his lyre in the corner, and several fathers clapped their hands in time to the music.

In the rush to serve tables, the innkeeper, balancing a tray of breads and meats answered a knock at the door. A man calling himself Joseph stood outside. He and his young wife needed a room. A glance told the innkeeper the woman was heavy with child. He could barely hear himself talk with so much noise behind him, but he managed to explain that there was no room, only an empty stall in the stable out back.

Shrugging his shoulders, the innkeeper quickly apologized and went into the crowded room. Outside, Joseph stood for a moment, listening to the laughter inside. Back in the stillness of the night, Mary waited. The young couple made their way to the stable. And while music and laughter and feasting went on and on, just yards away behind the walls of the inn, the Son of God quietly entered mortality.

Sometimes the best moments of the Christmas season do not happen during the crowded parties or the rush of holiday preparations. They don't occur in the music and laughter, the camaraderie and feasting. Special Christmas memories are those quiet moments when God unexpectedly surprises us. With Himself. With an overwhelming sense of His nearness and love.

In the midst of so much activity, so much going on, so many days in the calendar filled with appointments or parties. God seeks out the quiet heart, and speaks to us in a still small voice.

Think of the stable in Bethlehem. Somehow it stands serene. What a contrast to the celebrating going on in that inn. Who would have supposed? Who would have suspected? If someone had only dropped what he was doing to leave the party and go check on his donkey. If someone had only slipped away from the festivities for a moment to seek a quiet moment outside.

Just think of what they might have witnessed! Perhaps they would have seen the angels. Maybe the shepherds. And yes, even the Son of God. Take the time this Christmas season to step outside the clamor and excitement. Visit the stable and ask God to speak to you in the quiet and serenity and stillness  
He will!!!!

## Oxen (Day 6)

### The Oxen

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock

"Now they are all on their knees",  
An elder said as we sat in a flock  
By the embers in hearth side ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where  
They dwelt in their straw pen  
Nor did it occur to one of us there

To doubt they were kneeling then.  
So fair a fancy few would weave  
In these years! Yet, I feel,

If someone said on Christmas Eve,  
"Come; see the oxen kneel,  
"In the lonely Barton by yonder coomb

Our childhood used to know",  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

## Sheep (Day 7)

### Once within a Lowly Stable

By Patty Smith Hill

Once within a lowly stable,  
Where the sheep and oxen lay,  
A loving mother laid her baby  
In a manger filled with hay.

Mary was the mother there,  
And the Christ that baby fair.

God sent us this loving baby  
From his home in heav'n above,  
And he came down to show all people  
how to help and how to love

This is why the angels bright  
Sang for joy that Christmas night.

## Shepherd (Day 8)

When the angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds "Keeping watch over their flock by night...they were sore afraid" (Luke 2:8-9). It seems that angelic visitations must have quite an effect when they appear suddenly. Sore afraid. Don't you imagine that sore afraid means more than nervous or uncomfortable?

How would you have felt? I suspect they were terrified. But then the angel delivered the good tidings, the joyful message, that the Savior, Christ the Lord, had been born. They listened and must have believed, because they decided they must go "with haste" to see Baby Jesus (Luke 2:16). When they had seen Him, they didn't just quietly return to their flocks...they shared what they had seen and heard (verse 17). They must have made quite an impression, because "all that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (verse 1)

Yes, when the shepherds listened and believed their fear was put to rest. They came unto Christ. Then they shared this new truth.

## Wiseman 1 (Day 9)

### **Stars were Gleaming**

By Nancy Byrd Turner

Stars were gleaming, shepherds dreaming  
And the night was dark and chill.  
Angels story rang with glory;  
Shepherds heard it on the hill

Ah that singing! Hear it ringing,  
Earthward winging, Christmas bringing!  
Hearken! We can hear it still!

See the clearness and the nearness  
Of the blessed Christmas star,  
Leading guiding; Wiseman riding  
Through the desert dark and far.

Lovely showing, shining growing,  
On-ward going, gleaming bringing!  
Hearken! We can hear it still!

## Wiseman 2 (Day 10)

### The First Noel

This star drew nigh to the north-west  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest.  
And there it did both stop and stay  
Right over the Place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three  
Fell reverently upon their knee  
And offered there in his presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

## Wiseman 3 (Day 11)

We three Kings of Orient Are  
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
Following yonder star.

Melchior: Born a babe on Bethlehem's plain  
Gold I bring to crown Him again;  
King forever, ceasing never  
Over us all to reign.

Caspar: Frankincense to offer have I'  
Incense owns a Deity nigh  
Prayer and praising all men raising,  
Worship Him, God on High.

Balthasar: Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume  
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing sighing, bleeding, dying,  
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold Him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
Heaven sings "Hallelujah!"  
"Hallelujah!" Earth replies.

O star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding  
Guide us to the perfect light.

# Baby Jesus (Day 12)

## **Luke 2:11**

For unto you is born this day in the  
city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

## **2 Nephi 19:6**

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;  
And the government shall be upon his shoulder;  
And his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor,  
The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

## **Picture a Christmas**

by Patricia Kelsey Graham

Picture a stable in Judea.  
Picture a sacred, silent night.  
And can you hear  
The angels near  
And see the star so bright?

Picture the kind and gentle Joseph.  
Picture the mother, Mary, fair.  
And can you see  
So reverently  
The shepherds kneeling there?

Picture the little baby Jesus.  
Think of his life and words so dear.  
Sing praise to him;  
Remember him,  
As you picture Christmas this year.