

Streets of Christmastide
Poem by Chad Abbott

Walking from Manger Square down a sloping street of Chistmastide in the air, three young kids laugh and skip and bargain with hope as they walk home. It is not three wisemen following a star, but three soul friends from Bethlehem glancing at airstrikes in the distance and wondering if Herod is still haunting the innocents among their kin.

One of the kids, whose heart is tender and reveres the ancestors, looks back at the place where they say Jesus was born, and says,
"I wonder who taught Mary and Joseph to have such courage?"

One of the others, whose heart leaps in an anxious flutter at the state of the world, looks down to see shells of bullets and old canisters of tear gas. Pausing to take the sight in, they ask,
"I wonder if Mary and Joseph knew this kind of grief? Who was it that held them close?"

The third child, whose heart holds hope running deep into the unknown, looks ahead towards the city of Jerusalem, the city of peace. With a tear running down her cheek, she shouts towards the wall that separates,
"Mary and Joseph never gave up and neither will we!"

Whether they are the streets of Bethlehem or Chicago or London or Cairo or Nogales or Kyiv, the love and hope of Christmastide walks us towards Immanuel, "God with us," and it is there that we find room in the Inn.

Christmas Eve Prayer

God of hope and courage, bless all of your human family with your unwavering presence this Christmas Eve that we may know the peace of your abiding love in Jesus, the child of our longing. Amen.