Association for Promoting Retreats

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December 2026 APR Prayer reflection

Two short Christmas poems

I saw a stable

I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew Him, had Him in their care,
To men He was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there,
And the world's danger.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge 1861-1907

What the Donkey Saw

No room in the inn, of course,
And not that much in the stable,
What with the shepherds, Magi, Mary,
Joseph, the heavenly host —
Not to mention the baby
Using our manger as a cot.
You couldn't have squeezed another cherub in
For love nor money.

Still, in spite of the overcrowding,
I did my best to make them feel wanted.
I could see the baby and I
Would be going places together.

U.A. Fanthorpe 1929-2009

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Prayers

Fortitude in the Christmas Story

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the Wise Men, the obedience of Mary and Joseph, and the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you and all those you love this Christmas and always. ***Amen***

The Gifts of the Kings:

May the Gold that shows us our own preciousness,
the Frankincense that breathes God into us,
and the Myrrh that both heals and leads us from death to eternal life
be with us all. ***Amen***

May Christ,
Who by His incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly,
fill us all with joy and peace. ***Amen***

Activities:

- *Write your own prayer for Christmas,* bringing in elements of the Gospel Stories.
- *Create your own Christmas card* to show what Jesus' coming means to you.
- *Remember and pray for those living in the Holy Land today*, especially those who believe in Jesus or still gently wait for their Messiah. Take some supportive action.
- *Reach out to someone* who is alone and/or despairing this Christmas.
- *Reflect and pray around 3 Christmas cards you receive* that help you consider the reality of Christ.

Rosey Feuell – APR Trustee, November 2026