



He had to lie there without having anything against boredom, no bell and no ball of thread, nothing whatsoever. As a result, the shepherd boy felt sorry from the heart for the heavenly Child. He took the tiny little fist in his hand, brought out the thumb and put it in the mouth of the CHRIST Child. And from now on the CHRIST Child never needed to be sad any more, because the poor little lad had given Him the most precious gift which one can ever give to a baby: His own thumb. (K.H. Waggerl)

### This Month's Heartfelt Matters

- That St. Joseph may keep mankind under his protective cloak, because countless people are on the brink of hell.



We, poor pilgrims in this vale of tears, how badly do we need the powerful intercession of St. Joseph! – May he turn his loving face to the people and fill their hearts with comfort, confidence and faith.

Let us entrust him our heart, all our work, all our activities, fears and worries. In return, he will pray his beloved JESUS for His blessing and, exactly at holy Christmas time, inner peace and joy.

Once again, I leave you all to the care of St. Joseph, but I remain with you in my thoughts,

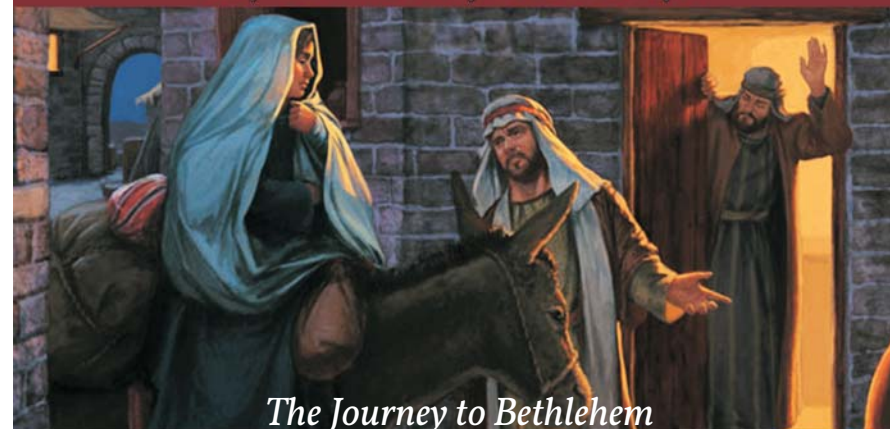
With Christmas greetings and the blessing of Saint Joseph,

*Brother Paula*



December 2018

## Lay Community of St Joseph



*The Journey to Bethlehem*

Mary and Joseph set out on their long and difficult journey. Mary, far advanced in pregnancy, is on the little donkey and Joseph is walking next to her. Joseph is very concerned about his holy Spouse, making sure that she is not freezing. Her feet are cold and he wraps them up in his blanket. Having arrived in Bethlehem, they do not find accommodation. An old man, who had well noticed that they were turned down at every door and that Joseph became disheartened, calls to them: „Hey, Galileans! Down at the end under those ruins, there is a den. Perhaps there is nobody in yet.“ They hurry to it. Tired after the walk, they are welcomed by an ox. Joseph lights his little lamp. Immediately he prepares a comfortable bed for Mary. He takes from the spare hay and spreads it on a dry, protected

place so that Mary may have a resting place. Before the den he has discovered a brooklet and he goes and fetches water with a battered bucket. They both have a little bite to eat.

Joseph lights a fire. He drapes his mantle as a curtain on the hole. It is a makeshift protection from the cold. „Mary, go to sleep,“ he says. „I will watch over the fire.“ Mary obeys Joseph – she rests a while, then she kneels down and prays. She looks for Joseph and notices that the little fire is slumbering together with its guardian. Mary prays for a long time with outstretched arms up. Her face brightens up – she prostrates herself with her face to the earth and again persists in a long prayer. The cold of this winter night penetrates from all sides. Joseph who is so close to the door, or rather a hole, gets quite a taste of it. He wakes up, puts some more wood on the fire and warms his hands and feet at the embers. He straightens himself up and approaches Mary’s pallet. „Are You sleeping, Mary?“ he asks three times until she replies. „I am praying.“ – „Do You need mee?“ – „No, Joseph.“ – „GOD be with You, Mary!“ – „And with You, too, Joseph!“

Mary lifts her head as if she had a celestial call, and goes on to her knees again. She becomes transfigured by a supernatural smile. What does she see? What does she hear? What does she feel? She is the only one who could tell what she sees, hears and feels in the luminous hour of her maternity. The light around her is increasing more and more. It seems to come down from Heaven – above all, it seems to originate from herself ... The light becomes unbearable to the eye. And the Virgin disappears in so much light, as if she had been absorbed by an incandescent veil of light ... and emerges from it as the Mother. – Mary takes her new-born SON in her arms.

– She bends down and kisses Him with an immaculate kiss on His chest, where underneath the heart is beating, ... and is doctoring the wound of His heart already in advance. – Joseph sees the tremendous light in the den. ... „Come, Joseph!“ says Mary and repeats it. The two meet at the foot of the straw bed and they look at each other, weeping blissfully ...

Excerpt from “The Poem of the Man-God”  
by Maria Valtorta

### What Love Prompted the Shepherd Boy to Do

In that night in which the beautiful star had appeared in the sky to the shepherds and they had all set out on the way that the Angel had shown them, there was also amongst them a boy who was still so little and at the same time so poor that the others did not at all want to take him with them because he did not possess anything anyway that he could have given to the Godly Child. But the little lad would not accept it. All on his own he secretly set off on this long journey and he actually reached Bethlehem. But the others had already gone home again and everyone in the stable was sleeping.

St. Joseph was sleeping, Mother Mary and the Angels under the roof were also sleeping, as well as the ox and the donkey, only the Child JESUS was not sleeping. He was lying very quietly on His straw pallet, a little sad perhaps in His loneliness, but without crying and wriggling, because, of course, He was a particularly well-behaved Child, as you can imagine. And now the Child looked at the boy standing there in front of the manger without anything in his hands, no little piece of cheese and no tiny flock of wool, nothing whatsoever. And the little lad looked again at the CHRIST Child, as