

Baby Jesus, born in a shed,

said to his mother,

Is this my home, O mother mine?

Is this my belonging and my landscape?

He quite liked the donkey and the little lambs.

It felt warm and safe.

And his mother replied, Joseph's hand on her shoulder,

My precious child,

this is the place of your birth,

but no, not your home.

It is safe for the moment,

but moments change as tyrants change,

and we may be on the move again.

And Baby Jesus said,

So, where is home?

Where do I belong?

Where shall I settle?

And his mother replied, her hand on her heart,

You belong with the no-belongs,

your home with those who lack a home,

your friends the failed and the misfortunate.

Your head will rest on the pillow of exile,

your heart beat in each wounded heart.

Your heart will be their home.

You must speak to them of the lilies and the sparrows,

telling over and over Isaiah's word

that close to the heart of God are held the smallest lambs.

You will give them hope where no hope hovers,

bleed for justice, gather the strays,

and one day you will ride this donkey into the great city.

Your landscape is the desert of suffering,

the mountain of need,

and the sorrow-tinged sky.

The vast sea that brings the fish

brings vastly too those who need harbours of peace.

You are not a settler, my son,

but a wanderer with the wanderers,

a kindler of love

for those who sit with pining eyes

around the campfires

of the world.

And the Baby Jesus listened.



Mary Wickham RSM



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