**A Christmas Homily in Rhyme [2016] (almost . . . .**

**What is our purpose? Why are we here?**

**And why is Christmas so special this year?**

**So many questions, desires, hopes, fears**

**What is so different? What will we hear?**

**We so want to know how to us you’ll appear!**

**That night you were born. Was it dark? Was it cold?**

**Placed in a feeding trough, is all that we’re told.**

**Who helped Mary give birth to you midst water and blood**

**Did this foretell the way you would leave us**

**on that Friday called Good?..**

**No palace or finery to welcome you on earth.**

**Just a manger and swaddling clothes to greet your lowly birth.**

**What do you bring us: we do want to know?**

**And will we receive it? And will our hearts glow?**

**Prophets spoke of promises, of a God of great love,**

**of hope, peace and joy and good will from above,**

**and that one day a saviour, Jesus the Christ,**

**would scatter the darkness and fill us with light.**

**Our songs they are joyful. We celebrate, give praise,**

**to a King like no other, our voices we raise.**

**He would help the needy, the poor, blind and lame**

**and, in setting people free, we would glorify his name.**

**How the Father must love us, sent his Son to bring light**

**that shines forth compassion and life, oh so bright!**

**Teaching goodness and justice, of care for creation;**

**He showed a forgiveness that heals broken relations.**

**Do angel hosts sing as they did long ago?**

**If trumpets sound at your coming, how will we know?**

**Rejoicing, rejoicing, and carols fill the air.**

**Peace, joy, and happiness are what we want to share.**

**Injustice, wars, famine still rage and decimate.**

**When will it end? What difference can your coming make?**

**In your great wisdom You invited our aide:**

**and Mary and Joseph agreed, though afraid.**

**Like them, to your call, we want to say YES**

**and help you, somehow, restore our noblesse.**

**Jesus, Emmanuel, our Saviour, God-with-us,**

**Shepherd, King, Servant, you came without fuss.**

**You believed in our goodness - our love - that we care**

**to help the world be a better place and overcome despair.**

**You came to renew faith and strengthen belief**

 **with you, we’d strive even more to bring the poor relief,**

**and give care to the lonely, the sick, the refugee,**

**and, by acting in your name, help set people free.**

**To the suffering bring healing: kindness will abound.**

**Welcome and friendship for the lonely be found;**

**seeking well-being and good for all those around.**

**To those of other Faiths we’ll show respect, affirmation;**

**and, to those who are homeless, a welcome location.**

**This is the purpose: to be here at your birth.**

**Jesus, the greatest of gifts and of regal worth.**

**So, what do we bring you this Night like no other?**

**to the birth of a child, who became our brother?**

**Let us be angels singing joy at your birth.**

**Let our songs of rejoicing and praise fill this earth**

**Let our longing for peace heal all our transgressions.**

**As we sing Glory to God in the highest of heavens.**

**From us may your smile beam and emanate.**

**May your love give life, enrich, and captivate,**

**May your light shine in us and show others the way,**

 **let gladness fill the lives of those we encounter each day.**

**Happy birthday Jesus, this is our song.**

**We love you, we love you, to you we belong.**

**With shepherds and wise men, you fill us with joy.**

**New hope and new courage comes with this baby boy.**

**May Christmas live for ever until you come again!**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen!**

**May Christmas live for ever until you come again!**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen!**