

- 1 We'll reflect today on St Luke's gospel, as he writes of the birth of Jesus. We'll pause after each section.
- 2 For the taking of the census,
'everyone went to his own town to be registered. And so Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem because Joseph was a descendant of King David who was born there.'
(Lk 2¹⁻⁴)
- 3 At this time I think of some of the places and some of the people who form part of **my** 'roots'...
(Pause...)
- 4 *'Mary gave birth to her son... She laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.'*
(Lk 2⁷)
- 5 I can think of occasions when I have felt excluded, not part of what is going on, and I think of when I have not fully "included" other people...
(Pause...)
- 6 *'The shepherds watched their flocks during the night.'*
(Lk 2⁸)
- 7 I think of particular people who have expressed care for me, and those for whom I have cared...
(Pause...)
- 8 *'The angel said to the shepherds in the fields: "Do not be afraid!"'*
(Lk 2¹⁰)
- 9 Those words - *"Do not be afraid!"* - occur 366 times throughout the Bible, as though they are a reminder for every day of the year. I name in God's presence anything in my life of which I am afraid, nervous, unsure, apprehensive. As I think of anything I say to myself,
"Do not be afraid...",
and I place those fears in God's hands...
(Pause...)
- 10 *'The angel said to the shepherds: "I bring you news of great joy."'*
(Lk 2¹⁰)
- 11 I can think back to times when I have experienced great joy...
(Pause...)
- 12 The angel told the shepherds that
"Today in the town of David the Saviour is born."
(Lk 2¹¹)
- 13 I repeat to myself those words of the angel, but replace the words *"the town of David"* with my own name: *"Today in (me) the Saviour is born..."*
(Pause...)
- 14 *'The shepherds hurried from the fields and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger, as they had been told.'*
(Lk 2¹⁶)
- 15 I can think of special moments throughout my life when I have been more aware than at other times of God's presence...
(Pause...)

16 *'Mary treasured all these things
and thought deeply about them
in her heart.'*

(Lk 2¹⁹)

17 I pray to remain thoughtful, reflective,
and prayerful.

(Pause...)

18 *'The shepherds went back,
praising God
for all that they had seen and heard.'*

(Lk 2²⁰)

19 For what can I give praise and thanks to
God at this time?...

(Pause...)

20 *Let us pray, using some words of Robert
Louis Stevenson:*

**"O God, our loving Father,
help us rightly to remember
the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in
the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and the worship of the wise men...
May Christmas morning
make us happy to be your children,
and Christmas evening
bring us to our beds
with grateful thoughts,
forgiving and forgiven,
for Jesus' sake. Amen."**



"Utterly at home,
God lives in us forever"

- *Julian of Norwich (see 3 Dec).*



"If Jesus Christ is not true God,
how could he help us?
If he is not true man,
how could he help us?"

- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer .*



Angels we have heard on high; Away in a manger; Come and join the celebra-
tion; Go tell it on the mountain; Hark the herald angels; O come, all ye faith-
ful; Once in royal David's city; On Christ-
mas night all Christians sing; Sing a sim-
ple song; Unto us is born a Son; While
shepherds watched

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org