



# Invitation to Advent

## **In search of our kneeling places**

*Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem*

In each heart lies a Bethlehem  
An inn where we must ultimately answer  
Whether there is room or not  
When we are Bethlehem-bound  
We experience our own advent in his  
When we are Bethlehem-bound  
We can no longer look the other way  
conveniently not seeing stars  
Not hearing angel voices.  
We can no longer excuse ourselves by busily  
Tending our sheep or our kingdoms.

This Advent let's go to Bethlehem  
And see this thing that the Lord has made known to us  
In the midst of shopping sprees  
Let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts.  
Through the tinsel  
Let's look for the gold of the Christmas Star.  
In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos,  
Let's listen for the brush of angels' wings.  
This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem  
And find our kneeling places.



# Invitation to Advent

## **This year will be different**

*Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem*

Who among us does not have dreams  
That this year will be different?  
Who among us does not intend to go  
Peacefully, leisurely, carefully toward Bethlehem,  
For who among us likes to cope with the  
Commercialism of Christmas  
Which lures us to tinsel not only the tree  
But also our hearts?  
Who among us intends to get caught up in tearing around  
And wearing down?  
Who among us does not long for:  
Gifts that give love  
Shopping in serenity  
Cards and presents sent off early?  
Long evenings by the fireside with those we love?  
(the trimming devoid of any arguing about who's going to hang  
what where,  
The aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg mingling with the pine  
scent of the tree  
And carols gently playing over our idyllic scene)  
And the children! The children cheerfully talking about  
Giving instead of getting?  
Who among us does not yearn for  
Time for our hearts to ponder the Word of God?  
Moments of kneeling and bursts of song?  
The peace of quiet calm for our spirit's journey?

This year we intend to follow the Star  
Instead of the crowd.  
But of course, we always do  
Intend the best.  
(And sometimes best intentions tend to get the better of us!)  
This year, when we find ourselves off the path again  
(And we invariably will!),  
Let's not add yet another stress to our Advent days,  
That of "trying to do Christmas correctly!"  
Instead let's approach the birth of our Lord  
With *joyful* abandon!  
And this year  
Let's do what Mary did and rejoice in God,  
Let's do what Joseph did and listen to our dreams,  
Let's do what the Wise Men did and go to worship  
Let's do what the shepherds did and praise and glorify God  
For all we've seen and heard!  
As for the Advent frantic pace, we don't have time for that.  
We'll be too busy singing!  
This year will be different