



**Share the
Journey** ☼
#sharejourney

Share the Journey and expand the horizons of your heart this Christmas

Advent message Cardinal Tagle 2018

If you look at Christ's birth and death with today's eyes, you could think he was a loser; born in a stable and thirty-three years later crucified by his own people like a common criminal.

Despite his lowly birth and his humiliating and agonising death, through the events in his life, this man of very humble origins revolutionised how we see the poor and marginalised, how we think of power and who we deem to be "winners" and "losers" in our world.

Christ's journeys – while in the womb, during his life as a preacher, to the cross, to his heavenly Father – tell us about how to face our own journeys as individuals and communities today.

Let us just take a moment this Advent to reflect on how many times we see news images of pregnant migrant women crossing deserts or getting off unsafe boats, with no home to go to. Can we imagine ourselves being on their journey or on Joseph and Mary's migrant journey to Bethlehem? The town was not equipped to welcome or accommodate them. It could not offer the care a pregnant woman needed. The Holy Family was one family too many for this small place.

Can we put ourselves in the shoes of the shepherds who went to visit the Christ child? They were uneducated outcasts in their society and yet the angels appeared to them, not to a rich landowner, and said, "Do not be afraid." The human response might be to hide away in fear when something unexpected and unexplained happens, but the shepherds went to look for the child and then they spread the Good News to everyone about what they saw.

Like Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and the Magi, we are called on journeys which require strength, perseverance, humanity, wisdom and courage. On these journeys, we meet people who we may be tempted to prematurely label or judge as a "winner" or a "loser" in life, without knowing their full story nor understanding their significance to our lives.

The one person who does not appear to go on a journey in the Nativity is King Herod. He stays in the security of his palace and gives orders to kill all boy children in Bethlehem. He tries to keep hold of his kingdom by using his power to spread fear and mistrust. The Holy Family again draws the "loser" card and becomes a refugee family in Egypt.

When Jesus as an adult tells us “the kingdom of God is within you”, he is asking us to open our eyes to a new way of seeing a world where there are no people who are considered “losers”. It is in the small and filthy places where our kings are born, not in palaces. The poorest and most marginalised people in our societies deliver true messages of hope to us.

We at Caritas, along with Pope Francis, are urging the whole world to “Share the Journey” with migrants and refugees. The first step is quite simply to see the other person in their full God-given dignity and not look away in fear, prejudice or hatred.

This Advent season, our Share the Journey campaign invites you to expand the horizons of your hearts by organising a short pilgrimage with the migrants and refugees in your community so you can learn more about each other and forge bonds of hope. Your journey will be part of a [1 million kilometre global journey](#) with migrants and refugees that people across the world are organising. It is how we live out our journeys and how we treat the people we meet that has the potential to transform our world.

As we prepare our hearts and minds for Christmas, let us remember that hope, like the migrants and refugees of our world, is always on a journey forward. By opening our eyes and reaching out to others, we will find our hearts carried forward by a great wave of love and our destination will be peace. That will be when no person nor country will say “there’s no room for you here”.

Have a blessed Advent journey!

Yours in Christ,

Cardinal Luis Antonio G. Tagle