



## 'And she laid him in a manger...' Luke 2.7

There is a church in Bethlehem built over the site where, according to tradition, Jesus was born. Entrance into what at first seems only darkness is through the doorway pictured here, a doorway so low that most adults have to double up to get inside. Unlike the grand, imposing doors of say, St Peter's Basilica in Rome, which stand 25 feet tall, this simple stone entrance is just 4 feet high. It was an aid to security in earlier times but now the 'Door of Humility' as it's known, serves simply as a potent symbol. It requires the bodies of visitors to bend and become small in order to enter. So, as they stoop low, they mirror God's own stooping, God's own belittling by 'being born in human likeness'. And in a manger!

But as well as mirroring the humility of God, pilgrims are being tutored by the door in a humility of their own. Whoever they are and wherever they come from, they cannot help but make a profound bow and lower their eyes as they approach the sacred space.

Over the last year, a virus has brought humanity to its knees, and revealed a door of intense vulnerability through which we must pass. Perhaps this vulnerability will open our eyes a little more than usual to the scandal of Christmas. Perhaps the way in which pandemic has underlined the plight of the poor and powerless will make us

readier to be not only open-mouthed at the Incarnation but also intensely relieved, joyful, grateful... God chooses to be found in the helpless body of a poverty-stricken new-born? The creator of the cosmos bends low to live our lives *with us*?

Yes, that is the astonishing heart of our faith, and as our eyes accustom themselves to the darkness, we find that God is already there, has already been born within it. And we begin to see the Light ...

**"In praying to a God who has chosen to be 'gravity-bound', and all the other constraints of human poverty, we offer our own loving to be re-made like God's love."**

Janet Morley

### Prayer

**Vulnerable God,  
may we follow you  
through the door of humility  
and find you born among us.  
Amen**