



Christmas, 1991

JOSEPH

Joseph you were a good man,
So the scriptures say.
You were trying to be so gentle,
Quietly sending poor Mary away.

No one could really blame you
For what you planned to do.
It's hard to face betrayal
From love that's pledged to you.

But your eyes beheld the treacherous sight
Of her stomach full of life.
How could she do such a thing,
While pledged to be your wife?

But in your dreams the angel said,
"Joseph do not be afraid!"
Go, and take her as your wife!
And see what God has made.

The words of the angel were puzzling
As you awoke from restless sleep.
Why would this be asked of you?
Why must your pledge you keep?

Whatever the struggles you faced within,
I'm glad you played your part
And took young Mary to be your wife
Giving her the love of your heart.

For as the days ahead did pass,
The life inside her grew
Until the time of birthing came,
And her child was given to you.

You shared your love with each of them,
The madonna and the child,
And in the miracle of this birth,
Your lips began to smile.

You learned of Mary's faithfulness
To you and to the Lord,
And you learned that in this holy birth
To earth had come God's Word.

It wasn't easy for you to be
The father of this child,
The one through whom, the prophets said,
The world would be reconciled.

I think of the responsibility
Given to you that day
When the angel came to you in dream
Saying, "Do not send her away."

You must have shown to our dear God
A faith so deep and wide
That it would be a fitting home
For the Christ-child that dwelt inside.

And so you nurtured the little babe
With all the love of your heart.
You loved and hugged and kissed the child
That God had set apart.

You laid the foundation for his life
As he walked upon this earth
Proclaiming the Kingdom of our God
Offering us the heavenly birth.

The child you held in your strong arms
Was a gift from God above,
A gift of grace forgiving sins,
God's incarnate gift of love.

The little child you raised in love
Was God's only begotten Son,
Sent into our sinful world
That salvation might be won.

I am so glad each Christmas day
That you did play your part
Taking young Mary to be your wife
Giving her the love of your heart.

In your deeds of love for her
And for the baby Jesus,
You made a fitting place for God
To send the love that frees us.

We wish you and your loved ones all the joy of the Christmas season. May the love of God cradled in a manger be cradled each and every day in your hearts.

The Vige Family
Pastor, Lynne, Beth and Tim

* Line drawing by Tim