

“The Posadas”

The posadas are celebrated daily for the nine days leading up to Christmas, from December 16th to 24th. Their origin dates back to 1587. The litany for asking for lodging is meant to remind people of the long pilgrimage—from Nazareth to Bethlehem—of the Virgin Mary and Joseph to register for one of the provincial censuses ordered by Emperor Caesar Augustus (63 BC–14 AD), which coincided with the birth of Jesus.

The biblical text that inspired it is Luke 2:1-7

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.”

Lyrics in Spanish and English

Peregrinos / Pilgrims:

En el nombre del cielo / In the name of heaven,
os pido posada / I beg you for lodging,
pues no puede andar / for my beloved wife
mi esposa amada / can walk no further.

Posaderos / Innkeepers:

Aquí no es mesón / This isn't an inn,

sigan adelante / go on ahead.

Yo no puedo abrir / I can't open,

no sea algún tunante / lest some scoundrel be here.

Peregrinos / Pilgrims

No seas inhumano / Don't be heartless,

tennos caridad / have mercy on us,

que el Dios de los cielos / and the God of Heaven

te los premiará / will reward you.

Posaderos / Innkeepers:

Ya se pueden ir / You can leave now

y no molestar / and don't bother me,

porque si me enfado / because if I get angry

os voy a apalear / I will beat you.

Peregrinos / Pilgrims

Venimos rendidos / We come weary

desde Nazaret / from Nazareth,

yo soy carpintero / I am a carpenter

de nombre José / named Joseph.

Posaderos / Innkeepers

No me importa el nombre / I don't care the name,

déjenme dormir / just let me sleep,

pues yo ya les digo / for I tell you now

que no hemos de abrir / we will not open it.

Peregrinos / Pilgrims

Posada te pide / Lodging is asking you
amado casero / beloved innkeeper,
por solo una noche / for just one night
la reina del Cielo / the Queen of Heaven.

Posaderos / Innkeepers

Pues si es una reina / If it is a queen
quien lo solicita / who is requesting it,
¿cómo es que de noche / how is it that at night
anda tan solita? / she is walking alone?

Peregrinos / Pilgrims

Mi esposa es María / My wife is Mary,
es reina del cielo / she is Queen of Heaven,
y madre va a ser / and she will be
del Divino Verbo / mother
of the Divine Word.

Posaderos / Innkeepers

¿Eres tú José? / Are you Joseph?
¿Tu esposa es María? / Is your wife Mary?
Entren peregrinos / Come in, pilgrims,
no los conocía / I didn't know you.

Peregrinos / Pilgrims

Dios les pague, señores / May God reward you, gentlemen,
vuestra caridad / for your charity,
y que os colme el cielo / and may heaven fill you
de felicidad / with happiness.

Todos / All

¡Dichosa la casa / Blessed is the house
que abriga este día / that shelters this day
a la Virgen pura / the pure Virgin,
la hermosa María! / the beautiful Mary!

**(Los posaderos abren la puerta y dejan entrar a los peregrinos /
The innkeepers open the door and let the pilgrims in)**

¡Entren santos peregrinos / Enter, holy pilgrims,
reciban este rincón / receive this humble dwelling,
que aunque es pobre la morada / for though it is poor,
os la doy de corazón! / I give it to you from my heart!
¡Cantemos con alegría / Let us all sing with joy
todos al considerar / as we consider
que Jesús, José y María / that Jesus, Joseph, and Mary
nos vienen a visitar! / are coming to visit us!

Devotions Reflections:

1. *"In the name of heaven, I beg you for lodging."*

Many of us "are preparing" by buying Christmas decorations, planning dinner menu, buying gifts. As you take a moment to think about how you prepare, consider this verse: Joseph and Mary have no place to stay during this season. Think about what is happening in the world, think about the homeless, think about the migrants who, for one reason or another, have had to leave their cities and are begging for shelter. Where do you see hope? Write a prayer for the vulnerable.

2. *"This isn't an inn, go on ahead. I can't open, lest some scoundrels be here."*

It's very common for us to tend to classify or stigmatize people. We hear the narrative that "migrants are ____." Write down the narrative you yourself have about migrants. Jesus invites us to

offer help, to offer our arms, our words. Ask yourself what you can do? What do you WANT to do? How can you contribute to building peace?

3. *"I don't care about the name, just let me sleep, for I tell you now, we will not open it."*

List all the things that are worrying you right now. Now write three things that have made you laugh this week. Write the name of one person you are grateful to have in your life. Turn your worries into prayer. Where do you see joy in your life? When we feel grateful to God, we let go of our grumpy side and are more open to empathizing with those who are suffering. Are you familiar with AMMPARO? It's the ELCA's strategy to accompany migrants with protection, advocacy, representation, and opportunities, this is a chance to learn more and share your joy with those suffering.

4. *"Enter, holy pilgrims, receive this humble dwelling, for though it is poor, I give it to you from my heart!"*

Christmas is approaching. It's not just a date on the calendar; it's a celebration of God's tangible love, who takes on the most fragile human form: a vulnerable baby. This demonstrates that when you love, you make yourself vulnerable. God isn't looking for a "perfect place"; He's looking for a heart willing to love. What does love mean to you? How do you show it to your family? How do you show it to your friends? How do you show it to strangers? How do you show it to foreigners?