

Finding Peace

*Plodding figures traverse the Christmas cards.
Journeying to Bethlehem
Mary and Joseph cut lonely figures
as they do what they are told -
'Return to the town of your birth for the census' -
the Occupiers impatient with this extra administrative duty?*

***The Christ child, as yet hidden,
travels with them.***

*But surely the country must have been in turmoil
with families trailing hither and thither
somehow managing the disruption of their daily lives
with no transport, no maps
Incurring debt
unsure of the next meal -*

***The Christ child, as yet hidden,
travels with them.***

*Maybe not so different from today
as people flee from danger
struggling with griefs and burdens
only added to by the stress of the season:
the extra costs, the hazards of pregnancy
frailty in old age, reluctance to leave a recently dug graveside
or the need to offer hospitality to the ragtag relatives
while setting one less place*

***The Christ child, as yet hidden,
travels with them.....and us***

*And where is peace to be found
amid the frenzy of shopping
expectation and false jollity
not to mention the dust and ashes of a bomb site
vivid on our screens?*

***The Christ child, as yet hidden,
travels with us.***

*Maybe this is a moment to look inward
to our hidden heart
and invite Him to emerge
to take His place amongst the trials and sorrows
and eventually hear Him say, 'My peace I give you,
not as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.'*

***The Christ child, as yet hidden,
travels with us.....
All the way.***