

Advent: 20th December - Sensual and earthy



O Antiphon: [Key of David](#)

Roman expansion, 264BC Shepherd

I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open. *Isaiah 22:22*

Oh, come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!

[Sung O Antiphon \(I-IV\), Arvo Part](#)

The story continues...

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant. (*Luke 2:1-5*)

Silence and Imaginative exercise

Caesar Augustus. Roman Empire. Quirinius governor of Syria. Nazareth. The sights, sounds and smells of Bethlehem. All strong reminders of how historical this story is - embedded in dates, places and people. Salvation is sensual and earthy. Our homes, our mornings, our conversations are all the stuff of salvation.

Closing Blessing

Be a bright flame before me,
Be a guiding star above me,
Be a smooth path below me,
And be a kindly shepherd behind me,
To-day, to-night, and for ever.

Garmina Gadelica