

# The Lily Pad

“I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.”

Solomon 2:1



## THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS SPIDER



**Sisters and Brothers in Christ, I open this Lily Pad with the gift of happiness and love for this Christmas season!**

Among the countless Christmas legends, I would like to share the one involving a **Christmas spider**. According to this legend, when Joseph was warned in a dream to flee from King Herod and the massacre which he intended to inflict upon the children of Bethlehem, several animals from the manger decided to accompany the Holy Family on their journey.

Each of the animals was determined to protect *baby Jesus* and his earthly parents, and each felt certain his or her particular talents would prove invaluable in that task. A **spider** wanted to come along. Yet none of the other animals felt the **spider** would be valuable. After all, she was only an insect. She had no keen ears or sharp teeth, no strong bones and no claws whatsoever. The **spider** persistently pleaded to be included, until finally the other animals agreed she could join them, provided **she** did not get in the way.

As the journey progressed, all of the allegedly brave animals were frightened off or were distracted. They all ended up returning home or initiated a more appealing adventure of their own. With Herod's troops on the march, and the Holy Family growing more and more tired, Joseph and Mary had little choice but to try and hide. Finding a small and discreet cave, they huddled inside, seeking shelter and rest, with the donkey and the spider their only remaining companions. Holding Jesus in her arms, Mary gently rocked him to sleep, and, for a while, it appeared everything would be fine. The only immediate problem was the chill in the air. Desiring to be of help, the **spider** carefully wove a web over the opening of the cave to try to keep the baby warm.



The **spider** had just finished her weaving when suddenly voices were heard outside the cave. The soldiers had caught up with the Holy Family, and they were diligently searching the entire area. When they came to the cave where the Holy Family was hidden, both Mary and Joseph held their breath, certain they would be captured. Yet the soldiers passed by the cave. One soldier said it was a waste of time to search it, since anyone who had entered the cave would have broken the **spider's** web over the opening. Just then the baby looked up at the **spider** and chuckled, and the web shone in the light of baby Jesus' smile. Consequently, it was the seemingly insignificant **spider** who saved the day; and the legend goes on to say - **that this is why we hang tinsel on our Christmas trees ... to remind us of the silver strands of the web which the little spider wove ... and to remind us that no act of kindness, no act of courage, no act through which we seek peace with justice is ever wasted.**

So, if you see a **spider's** web early on a cold morning, you'll find it glistens and gleams. And that's also why we put tinsel on the Christmas tree – to remind us of the day the tiny **spider** saved the life of the Holy Family or so the legend goes

Apostle Paul says we are the people God lovingly chose as his own. In his earthly life, Christ showed us love which surrounds and binds us together. A life affected by this love extends the peace of Christ to the entire beloved community. Amongst other things it is a life that shows compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. These were just the things that the stable animals including the spider were showing in their care of baby Jesus.

Paul suggests to us that home life is to be a special example of Christian love. He challenges us to have an open, loving attitude toward each other. We are to be forgiving and tolerant of one another. As a consequence of all this we come to know the peace – *“and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 4:7 Paul reminds us that as a family what we do and say should be done in the name of Jesus and should reflect the love of God. That love which was shown in the **spider** who wove a web to protect and care for baby Jesus.

### **The Work of Christmas Begins**

When the carols have been stilled,  
When the star-topped tree is taken down,  
When family and friends are gone home,  
When we are back to our schedules

The work of Christmas begins:

*To welcome the refugee,*

*To heal a broken planet,*

*To feed the hungry,*

*To build bridges of trust, not walls of fear,*

*To share our gifts,*

*To seek justice and peace for all people,*

***To bring Christ's light to the world.***

*- by Michael Dougherty, a variation on Howard Thurman's 'When the Song of the Angels is Stilled'*

*May the Lord bless you and your loved ones with unlimited moments of joy and love.*

*May the spirit of happiness of this wonderful time keep illuminating  
your heart and fill your life with lots of joy!*

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*

*Pastor Clarissa, Bro. Martín,*

*Marissa, Biancha, Sophia, Nicolas, Cookie, Hachi, and Sadie*