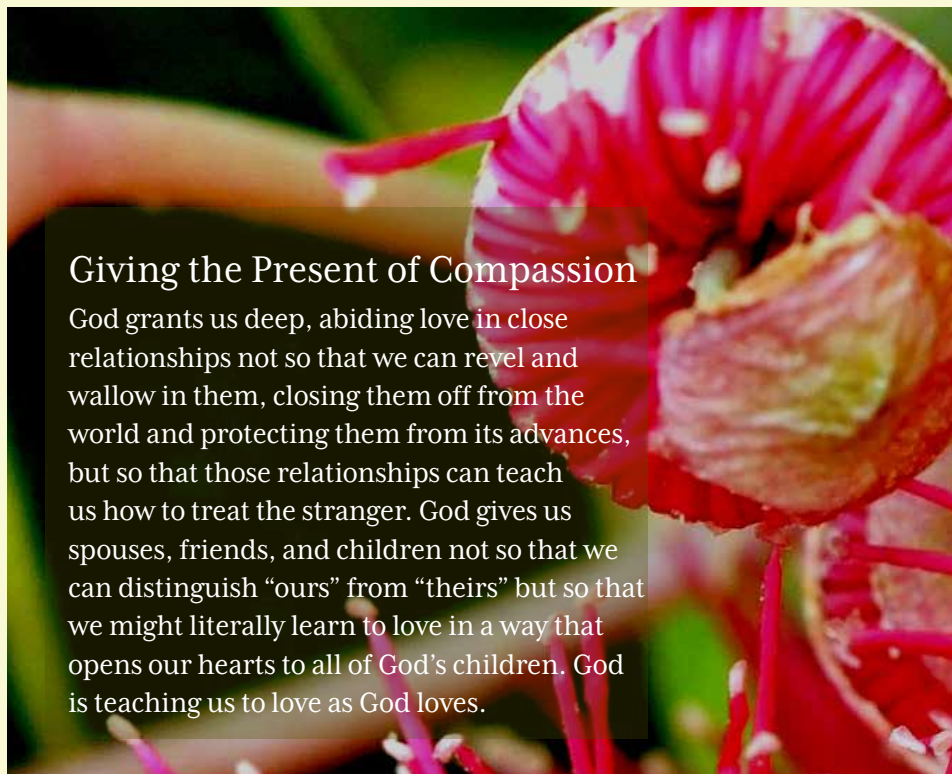


Advent

MOMENTS



We can take heart from the stories of the birth of Jesus in the New Testament. There is a great deal going on there, a lot of movement, uncertainty, and, yes, stress. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth. Mary and Joseph travel all the way south to Bethlehem. The shepherds have their view of the world overturned. The magi travel for miles following a star. Mary and Joseph have to escape the violent terror imposed by Herod. Christians believe that the birth of Jesus is about the way in which God comes home to the human family and dwells among us. Yet everyone in the story is far from home. Some are even homeless. This is the point. God comes home to us in the places where we are least at home.



Giving the Present of Compassion

God grants us deep, abiding love in close relationships not so that we can revel and wallow in them, closing them off from the world and protecting them from its advances, but so that those relationships can teach us how to treat the stranger. God gives us spouses, friends, and children not so that we can distinguish “ours” from “theirs” but so that we might literally learn to love in a way that opens our hearts to all of God’s children. God is teaching us to love as God loves.

Let the Star of Compassion guide and open your heart to accept and give love.