

John 3:16-19 Title: Silent Night

Introduction: The story behind Silent Night is the story of a miracle. It was composed in 1818 by Franz Xaver Gruber and written by Joseph Mohr in the small town of Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria. Franz sang the song with the guitar because the Church organ had been destroyed by flood. It was also just after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The twelve years of war had destroyed the country's political and social infrastructure. The country also had problems with climate change, volcanic eruptions, and famine due to failure of crops. There was a need for hope, peace, joy, love, and salvation. (WIKIPEDIA).

Imagine Jesus being born outdoors, in an animal stall: No doctors, no nurses, no computer monitor, and no epidural to ease the pain. Does that really sound like a silent night to you?

Think about this: Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem because of a census. Bethlehem was fully crowded. People were far from home and so the hotels were full. Does that sound like a silent night?

Think about this: Roman soldiers!

Think about the shepherds who came at night to visit Jesus. (Luke 2:8-20)

Instead of silent night, think

Noisy night

Painful night

Chaotic night

Smelly night

And then think about this:

Jesus didn't come to a perfect world. Jesus came to our world.

The messy world

The noise of strife, violence

The pain of brokenness

The chaos of confusion. Some people don't even know who they are & what to believe.

The stench of sin

And the Gospel of John tells us why:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Conclusion: pray the words in 4th verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" Pg.230:

Oh holy child of Bethlehem, descend to me, I pray.

Cast out my sin, and enter in.

Be born in me today. Amen.