

FaithBIT



Following Jesus in the New Year Reflection by Martin Rathjen

I walked behind an oversized Mary, Joseph, donkey and angel (from the Heart of the Beast Theatre), with a police escort, carrying a star, all to the sound of ringing bells and Hispanic music. Curious neighbors peered out of their windows, some joined in the procession, as we temporarily impeded the flow of traffic.

This December Posada, a re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for lodging in Bethlehem, included about 100 people, children youth and adults, on a cold winter's evening. We gathered at the Powderhorn Recreation Center in Minneapolis and slowly walked to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, about 1 mile away.

A Posada is a tradition brought to Latin America by the Spanish and adopted in both Mexico and Guatemala and now resonates with Hispanics living in the Twin Cities.

I had participated in several Posadas in the past which were more theatrical (including a very unsettling encounter with Herod, several stops along the way with much more puppetry and storytelling), but this simple Posada had a greater effect on me than the others.



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- Martin Rathjen

I felt less entertained and more engaged. In the past I felt more like a theater goer coming to see a show, but this time I, as a literal follower of Jesus on the streets of Minneapolis, was engaged. I walked prayerfully, reluctant to engage in conversation with others, as I contemplated Mary and Joseph's search for a safe place to rest and welcome their child into the world.

I am personally feeling challenged to discern how I am going to welcome Christ, and those seeking refuge, into my life and my community.

As you follow Jesus into 2020 to what, or whom, is God calling you?

“Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?” Then he will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.’” Matthew 25: 44-45