



Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland
Bishop Emeritus
Diocese Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

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Man and his wife fulfilling a divine destiny And responding to an imperious call from the Banks of the Tiber approach a town in the hills where two become three and the longing of the ages cradled in a manger accepts fealty from gift-bearing shepherds watching their flocks on fields where armies have marched and the sound of angry gunfire mocks the new-born harbinger of peace while generations apart a nation marking its two hundred and thirtieth birthday is convulsed in nagging doubt as leaders falter and systems fail with Iraq and Afghanistan and Darfur and terrorism and stem cell research and global warming grappling for the headlines overshadowing the ills and pains of those who are as unknown as the man and his wife were when shaking heads sent them to a stable's shelter there to await the birth of the Prince of Hope whose presence among us confides the paradoxical secrets of life and living not meant for those with ears who hear not and whose simple request for faith comes accompanied by a multitude of miracles telling us that there is a Bethlehem for you and me and assuring us that it is not too late to search for that unknown man and his wife as they come to David's city with their hope and ours womb-bound.....(© R.J. Boland 1973, 2006)

