



# The Christmas Nativity



In the days that Caesar Augustus issued a decree to count up all the people in his country (and all the countries that his soldiers had stolen for him),<sup>2</sup> a lowly carpenter Joseph (of the lesser-known musical 'Joseph and his technicolour chainsaw' fame) and his wife-to-be, Mary (of the Blessed Virgin variety) made their way to Bethlehem in Judea, aboard a 350 cc. donkey.

<sup>3</sup> Times were hard in those days and with there not being a tourist information bureau (for the Romans had closed it down and turned it into a casino)<sup>4</sup> Mary and Joseph had no choice but to stay in a stable at the rear of a busy inn. Strapped for cash, and with a baby on the way they decided to sell the donkey. However, on his way to market Joseph met a man who offered him a handful of magic beans in exchange for the donkey.<sup>5</sup> When Joseph returned to the stable, Mary put down her fourth banana and condensed-milk pizza and taking the magic beans in her hand loaded them into her slingshot catapult and launched them out of the stable door.<sup>6</sup> Joseph went to bed with no tea that night.

<sup>7</sup> In the morning, when Joseph looked out of the window, he couldn't believe his eyes. Where the magic beans had landed had grown a giant beanstalk. Taking up his knapsack, compass and copy of the Bethlehem Rough Guide he quickly climbed the beanstalk. At the top of the beanstalk, in a huge castle made from clouds, Joseph met God.

<sup>8</sup> "Fi, fie, fo, fum," boomed God, "Better get down the stalk, for the birth of my son!"

"What shall we call him?" asked Joseph.

<sup>9</sup> "Weren't you listening to your dreams, Joseph?"

"No, you're thinking of the technicolour dreamcoat Joseph! I'm the technicolour chainsaw one!"

<sup>10</sup> "Oh, are you? I don't remember seeing that stage show.... Call him Pinnochio!"

"No, that's Gippeto! I *am* a carpenter, but that's Gippeto!"

<sup>11</sup> God looked on his list. "You are quite right," he said. "You are to call him Jesus! Now get back down to the stable, your wife needs you. <sup>12</sup> Oh, and on your way down, would you mind hanging this star near the top of the beanstalk so that wise men from the east may come and pay homage to baby Jesus?"

<sup>13</sup> "Sure!" said Joseph talking hold of the star, marvelling at its beauty. "How did you...", he began.

"It's just cardboard covered in tin-foil", said God.

"Clever! Simple, but effective!" remarked Joseph before he descended the beanstalk.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph got down the beanstalk in time for the birth. At exactly midnight on the 25th of December 0 AD Mary gave birth to a beautiful 7 lb. baby boy, whom she called Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> After that they received an almost constant stream of visitors: shepherds, the wise men of whom God had spoken, social workers, health visitors,<sup>16</sup> a photographer from 'Hello' magazine and other people too numerous to mention. When Bethlehem quietened down after the Censusmas rush they eventually moved into a room at the inn,<sup>17</sup> but in a dream, Joseph was warned that the nasty King Herod would kill all the firstborn in the land, in a weird Egyptian Passover re-enactment.<sup>18</sup> So, Joseph led Mary and the baby Jesus up the beanstalk, pulling it up after them as they went and they hid up there for two years until it was safe to return to Judea.

*...to be continued at Easter*