Christmas Blessings from The Hope of Survivors

Dear Friends,

It's difficult to think that another year has passed so quickly! The Hope of Survivors has been directly assisting hundreds of new victims throughout the world this past year, and we know those numbers will continually increase, especially given the thousands who visit the website each month. You have made it possible for The Hope of Survivors to be a blessing to victims, pastors and church leaders in many countries, and we thank you for your prayers, time, and support.

For victims, especially, Christmas can be a painful reminder of their loss of church home and family, spiritual leadership and support. For this reason, I am including the following poem, which takes us back before Christ's birth, to the abuse Mary must have suffered from the "church" of her day, to now--a time when abuse from the pulpit appears to be pandemic.

*How Do I See the Foot of the Cross When the Pulpit is in the Way?*

By Mary*

Don't look at the pulpit, it wouldn't stay.
The shepherd may be a hireling anyway.

Look over there, by the wall,
See the manger, hay and all?
Joseph, protector from the church's strife.

Mary knew what people said. 
She probably turned many shades of red.

Some folks wanted to put her away. 
Some picked up stones aimed for her that day.

But her fiancée, he said, "nay." 
He said, "I'll marry her anyway."

What had her folks thought? Dare we say? 
Had they put her out? Saying, "Stay away!"

She had been upright, her character the same. 
Now friends blamed her, using names of shame.

The priest said, "Don't come to church." 
She was left on a spiritual search.

Yep, folks talked for many a moon. 
Now the baby is coming very soon.

* A Pseudonym

During this season, and always, I pray we will show the love of Christ to all with whom we come in contact, and that each of us will renew our commitment to making church a safe place for all, and a source of healing and hope for victims.

May God richly bless you and your loved ones this Christmas and throughout the New Year! 
Samantha, Steve and The Hope of Survivors' Directors, Officers & Volunteers

P.S. Please keep in mind that our offices will be closed for the holidays and for travel to/from the seminars we will be conducting at GYC from December 23-January 2.