

## **Thought for the day – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Revd John Marshall**

**Crisis at Christmas     John Johansen-Berg**

Old Tom was on a journey  
and he walked on through the cold  
looking for two simple things  
a bit of grub to eat  
and a middling warm place to kip.

At first he tried a house,  
all lit up with coloured lights;  
he rang the bell, a lady came,  
'Just need a bit of food,' he said  
but the door was already closed.

Next he tried a restaurant;  
there's always lots of grub left over.  
Knocked on the door and a bloke came out,  
'Any grub , mate, you can spare?'  
'Get off from here. You'll scare our customers',  
and a few spicy words as well.  
Tom got the message quick and scarpered  
quick as a flash.

He thought about a church then

and pushed open the big wooden door.  
He ventured in about six steps  
when two men barred his way  
'You're letting in a draught', one said  
and the other 'Watch the plate'  
as the sounds of the choir rose loftily  
and Tom retreated, closing the old wooden door.

He decided next on another house  
with a long winding path,  
by now the snow was falling  
and he was feeling tired and cold.  
His legs would hardly carry him  
and his eyes began to glaze.  
He staggered across the rock-hard lawn  
and with a sort of sigh, he crumpled to the ground.

It was a week later, after that heavy fall of snow,  
that the thaw came and melted it  
and a neighbour called the police.  
Old Tom had no last supper  
but he found a resting place  
a green mattress under, a brown pillow for his head  
and a white blanket to cover him.

Shine on star of Bethlehem Christian Aid Canterbury Press  
Have times changed? How would we respond?