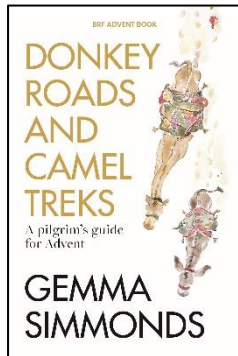


22 August 2025



Donkey Roads and Camel Treks

A pilgrim's guide for Advent

Gemma Simmonds

Pb, ISBN 978 1 80039 347 9, £9.99

Pilgrims come from all walks and stations of life, with different intentions, using different means of transport to reach different destinations. In our 2025 Advent book Gemma Simmonds draws on the lectionary readings to offer user-friendly encouragement to all willing pilgrims to explore what helps and hinders our Advent journey to deeper encounter with the flesh and blood God we find in scripture, in our lived experience and in the least of his sisters and brothers. She writes: 'My hope is that these reflections might be of use not only for individuals once more setting out on the yearly road to Bethlehem, but also for groups journeying together in the global caravan of half-believers, dogged hoppers and random fellow travellers. The themes behind the Christmas story have never seemed as relevant as they do at the time of writing.'

Praise for Donkey Roads and Camel Tracks

'I do not know a wiser spiritual guide to ordinary Christian living than Gemma Simmonds. Here, from her life of immersion in prayer, wisdom-seeking, formation of individuals and communities, and practical service in some extremely demanding situations, she offers a deeply attractive distillation, focused through key biblical texts. This is far more than an imaginative, thoughtful and practical way to approach Christmas; it gives the essentials for a lifetime following Jesus.' – *David F. Ford OBE, Regius professor of divinity emeritus, Selwyn College, University of Cambridge*

'What happens when all our plans for a spiritual Advent, filled with deep prayer and peaceful meditation, run into the reality of our often complicated and complex lives? In these beautifully written and artfully presented meditations, Gemma reminds us that the first Christmas also took place in a complicated and complex world, and that God is ready to accompany us in our messy lives, whether we're in a car, at our desk, in our living room or, yes, atop a camel.' – *James Martin, SJ, author of Learning to Pray*

About the author

Gemma Simmonds is a Roman Catholic sister of the Congregation of Jesus. An ecumenical canon of the Church in Wales, she has trained candidates for religious life and ordination in the Catholic and Anglican churches, working as a spiritual director and retreat giver for over 30 years. She is a regular broadcaster on religious matters on the BBC and other radio and television networks, and speaks internationally.

More information [here](https://www.brf.org.uk).

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