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Book of Christmas Songs





Selected and arranged by Franz Wasner and illustrated by Agathe Trapp

Assembled in the late 1940s



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The "Gloria in Excelsis" Throughout the Ages

In Hox Scaurruas, we read of a world of spirits, the nine choirs of angels. Frequently they are sent by God into the lives of men. We see them visiting Abraham, accompanying Tobias, wrestling with Jacob, announcing the birth of the Saviour and of John the Baptist, His forenuner, bringing counsel repeatedly to Joseph in his sleep, serving the Saviour in the desert, strengthening Him at the beginning of His suffering in the garden, announcing His glorious resurrection and prophesying His second coming after His accention.

But in all these meetings between angels and men, only once, one single time, have men heard the angels ing: in Bethlehem in that holy, silent night after the herald angel had announced: "Fear nothing, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . for this day is born to you a Saviour . ." There was with Him suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host. This heavenly choir sang the first Christmas carol of all times: Gloria in excelsi 100, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. And these lucky shepherds were the only mortals who have heard angels sing.

For two thousand years man has tried feebly to reproduce the sound of the first Gloria. To some, the heavenly army seemingly sang in unison, one mighty, long-drawn sound like a call from heaven to earth; others felt it rather as a polyphonic pattern, ups and downs of innumerable jubilant voices; others again seemed to hear clear homophonic chords; and again others felt sure there must have been a great antiphonal between that "angel of the Lord" and the multitude—the soloist and the choice.

The Christmas carols of all times and peoples keep strictly to the narrative of St. Luke, which has three distinct points: The recitative of the Angel of the Lord—The choir of the multitudes of angels—The reaction of the shepherds.

There are Christmas hymns dealing only with the "good tidings of great joy," the birth of Christ the Lord with the descriptions of the Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, the young mother kneeling beside Him singing Him to sleep with a lullaby. There are the carols in all tongues of this world promising peace to men and praising God in a never-ending Gloria.

And there are finally those lovely songs describing the reaction of the human heart to the heavenly message—the shepherds' songs of many lands, commemorating what those uncomplicated, unsophisticated hearts said to one another: "Let us go over to Bethle-hem," and how they came "with haste" and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant in the manger; and the centuries and nations go to work upon what must have gone on in the hearts of those shepherds; and although the shepherds from the Tyrolean high-lands may express is a little differently from their brothers in Italy or in the plains of Hungary, fundamentally it is the same: wonder, love, adoration, and the wish to help, to serve. So these carols describe the shepherds running over to the cave bringing their gifts: bread, milk, and butter, a sheepskin as a coverlet for the shivering Baby.

Singing at Christmas goes back to the early centuries of Christianity. It is the oldest of those innumerable folk customs still aliev throughout the world during the Christmas season. Books have been filled, years have been spent in research on his subject. We shall only mention here what we have heard and seen ourselves on our extensive travels through many lands of different continents. First of all, we have made one great discovery: while other folk customs, for instance those around weddings or burials, have strictly national features, we have found the same lovely folklore around Christmas in many countries.

Among the more wide-spread institutions are:

THE ADVENT WREATH, a big wreath of fir twigs (laurel or holly in the hot countries), on which are fastened four candles. The Christmas season begins four weeks before Christmas Eve, on the Feast of the First Sunday in Advent, and each of the four candles is for one Advent Sunday. This wreath hangs from the ceiling of the living room, and the family gathers under it in the evenings and sings carols.

THE ADVENT CANDLE, a tall, thick candle, the symbol of Christ, the Light of the World, is lit in the homes in these weeks of preparation.

THE CREEM, which has become universally loved and used in homes and churches throughout the Christian world. As will be seen later, we have St. Francis of Assis to thank for it. His great desire to celebrate the Christmas feast with special warmth and devotion took root and perpetuated itself everywhere. In cathedrals and abbeys solemn Matins are chanted, and Midnight service has become the heart of the feast for every adult Christian.

Almost as old as the singing of carols is the habit of giving gifts at Christmas time, in commemoration of the gifts the shepherds brought to the Christ-child. In England and America, gifts are distributed and the tree is lighted on the morning of December 25th. In Germany, Austria, Poland and the Scandinavian countries this is done on Christmas Eve.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE seems like the prophecy of Isaias come true:
"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine
tree, . . . to beautify the place of my sanctuary" (Isaias 60,13). It,
too, is a symbol of Christ as the Tree of Life.

CANDLES all over the house at Christmas are also found in the early centuries. Saint Jerome mentions them as an expression of Christmas joy.

THE HOLLY AND THE IVE, THE MISTLATOR AND THE YULE LOG are symbols which have their roots in pagan times and have become a part of the Christmas celebration in many lands now; also the baking of special cakes and cookies and the sending of greeting cards.

The vivid descriptions in some of the carols lead by themselves to dramatizations of the events, and so we find very early Christmas plays, especially shepherd plays. They began as Mystery plays in church, performed in the sanctuary before Midnight Mass. Soon they found their way into the homes of the faithful.

A lovely custom is enacted in many countries, the search for shelter of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. We found it mostly in the Alps—the Herberguechen, and in Mexico—the Ponada. Nine days before Christmas it begins. Many families gather together, a procession is formed. The statues of Mary and Joseph are carried, everybody bearing a lighted candle because it is after dark. Every night the precession stops before another home, and Mary and Joseph ask pleadingly for admission. The host answers from inside evry harshly, and during verse after verse he refuses to let them in, until he finally discovers who they are, and most embarrassedly apoligizes and opens his house wide for the illustrious guests. The statues are carried to a place of honor, where they are kept twenty-four hours in a mass of candles. The whole crowd kneels and prays and sings. Afterwards there is a party and great reloicing.

After Christmas Day itself, the second highest feastday of the season is Epiphany, the Feast of the Three Holy Kings. In many countries gifts are given on that day, in imitation of the Three Wise Men in Bethleben. Another folk dramatization is enacted on that day, the "Star-singing." After dark, little groups of three men dressed as the Three Holy Kings—one white, one brown, one black—one of them carrying a big star on a site, go from house to house caroling, and receive gifts of Christmas cake and dried fruit in exchange.

On Epiphany also there is the Blessing of the Homes. The whole family, led by the father, who carries a pan with incense, goes through all the rooms of the house, through all the barns and stables, and over every entrance the father of the house writes with blessed chalk the letters: C. M. B., the initials of the Three Holy Kings, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, thus keeping evil influences away from his home.

Some countries have their special customs:

In France, Christmas is predominantly a religious feast; the gifteging day is Epiphany. Céches are put up in homes and churches. Midnight Mass is attended by large crowds and celebrated with great solemnity. Groups sing in the streets during the Christmas season, and money is tossed to them from windows. There is a large number of French Christmas carols, which are called "Nocls," the term being derived from natulti i.e. diet, the birthday of Christ. In some parts of France, young people still dress as shepherds and shepherdesses and come with drums and pipes to the church for Midnight Mass, carrying torches to find the way (see the carol on p. 94, "Bring Your Torches, Jeannette, Isabella").

The Italian Christmas received its most powerful inspiration from St. Francis of Assisi on Christmas Eve 1223, near Greccio in Umbria, an inspiration which did not remain confined within the borders of Italy, but spread over the whole Christian world. It was three years before his death, and Francis desired, as his biographer Bonaventura tells us, "to re-enact the birth of Christ in order to move the people to devotion," Close to the Castle of Greccio was a cave which the Saint turned into a stable like that in which Iesus was born. A manger was built and filled with hav, and on Christmas Eve an ox and ass were led into the cave to stand on either side of the manger, and with the Pope's permission Mass was celebrated at midnight over the manger. Francis himself served as deacon and preached to the people, standing in front of the manger, "full with the sweet love of God and the greatest devotion." He had invited many of the brothers and also the people from the neighboring towns and hills and they came in great numbers, so "that the entire forest was bright with the light of many torches and resounded with the singing of solemn songs of praise."

The custom of the "crib" or "crèche" ("Krippe" in German, "nacimiento" in Spanish) has spread rapidly into other countries and is still very much alive in Italy, Austria, Bavaria, France, Spain, and Mexico.

In accordance with the Latin tradition, the time for gaiety and gifts and the enjoyment of children in Italy is the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, Twelfth Night, and its octave, with street celebrations, noisy instruments, and many stories about the fairy "La Befana" (derived from Epiphany), from whom the children expect gifts.

In Sweden, one of the special features of Christmas is the dance around the Christmas tree. Children and adults join hands and sing the Dance Carol (see page 112).

In Poland, Christmas carols are called "Kolendy" (singular Kolenda). They are sung in the homes when, on Christmas Eve, everybody joins hands after dinner and walks around the tree; in the churches at Midnight Mass; and all through the Christmas season which lasts until Epiphany or Candlemas. Under the tree is the "crib," and the tree is decorated with many decorations homemade during the Advent season. There are many quaint customs and observances connected with Christmas dinner, as, for instance, putting hay under the table cloth, breaking the walfer, etc.

While I am writing this, I listen to the sound of the bells in the nearby St. Theresita's Church playing—of all things—"Hark the Herald Angels Sing." We are in Caracas, Venezuela, on a concert tour through South America, and the words of Phillips Brooks come to my mind:

Christmas in lands of the fir tree and pine; Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine; Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white; Christmas where corn fields lie sunny and bright; Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight.

MARIA AUGUSTA TRAPP

Jerusalem Rejoice / Jerusalem Gaude



Jesus, Redeemer of the World / Jesu Redemptor Omnium





This ever blest recurring day Its witness bears, that all alone, From Thy own Father's bosom forth, To save the world Thou camest down.

O Day! to which the seas and sky, And earth, and heav'n, glad welcome sing; O Day! which heal'd our misery, And brought on earth salvation's King.

O Jesus, born of virgin bright, Immortal glory be to Thee; Praise to the Father infinite And Holy Ghost eternally.



Testatur hoc praesens dies, Currens per anni circulum, Quod solus e sinu Patris Mundi salus adveneris.

Hunc astra, tellus, aequora, Hunc omne quod caelo subest, Salutis auctorem novae Novo salutat cantico.

Jesu, tibi sit gloria, Qui natus es de virgine, Cum Padre et almo Spiritu, In sempiterna saecula.

A Child is Born in Bethlehem | Puer Natus in Bethlehem





Per Gabrielem nuntium Virgo concepit Filium.

Assumpsit carnem Filius Dei Patris Altissimus.

Reges de Saba veniunt, Aurum, thus, myrrham offerunt.

Laudetur sancta Trinitas, Deo dicamus gratias. Through Gabriel sent from Heav'n above, A virgin bore a Son with love.

In flesh appeared the Holy Son Of God the Father, Mighty One.

Three Holy Kings of Orient Gold, frankincense, and myrrh present.

Praise to the Holy Trinity, Thanksgiving unto God most high.

He, Whom Joyous Shepherds Praised / Quem Pastores Laudavere



Ad quem magi ambulabant, Aurum, thus, myrrham portabant, Immolabant haec sincere Nato Regi Gloriae.

Exsultemus cum Maria, In caelesti hierarchia Natum promat voce pia Dulci cum melodia.

Christo regi, Deo nato, Per Mariam nobis dato, Merito resonet vere Laus, honor et gloria. He, whom sages, westward faring, Myrrh and gold and incense bearing, Worshiped, bowing low before him, Reigns as King this happy morn.

Now rejoice with Jesus' mother, Praise her newborn son, and brother, Angels vie with one another, Praising Him beyond the sky.

Sing to Christ, the King who reigneth, Yet of Mary manhood gaineth, Born our God; let us adore Him: Glory be to God on high.



Carol of the Nuns of Saint Mary's, Chester

ca. 1425



English macaronic carol

Teneramente



Jesus at His mother's breast, She doth kiss her Child and Lord, And adores th' Incarnate Word.

Mother, pray thy Holy Son, That He give us of His joy, That we heav'nly life enjoy.



Lactat Mater Dominum, Osculatur parvulum, Et adorat Dominum.

Roga mater Filium Ut det nobis gaudium, In perenni gloria.

O Come, All Ye Faithful / Adeste Fideles







See how the shepherds, summon'd to His cradle, Leaving their flocks, drew nigh with holy fear. We too shall thither bend our joyful footsteps: Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above: Glory to God, glory in the highest: Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n: Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: Refrain En grege relicto, humiles ad cunas Vocati pastores approperant. Et nos ovanti gradu festinemus: Refrain

Cantet nunc Iol chorus angelorum; Cantet nunc aula caelestium: Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo: Refrain

Ergo qui natus die hodierna, Jesu, tibi sit gloria! Patris aeterni Verbum caro factum: Refrain

O Publish the Glad Story / Célébrons la Naissance





Those happy tidings ringing Olim pastoribus
By angels sweetly singing Fait nuntiatus
O leave your sheep to pasture
In agro viridi,
O come adore your Master
Filliumque Dei.

Th' angelic choir rejoices Juncti pastoribus,
They sing with heav'nly voices:
Puer vobis natus
To God who did conceive men
Gloria in excelsis
And peace on earth doth give them
Bonae voluntatis.



Mille esprits angeliques Juncti pastoribus, Chantent dans leur musique: Puer vobis natus, Au dieu par qui nous sommes Gloria in excelsis, Et la paix soit aux hommes Bonae voluntatis.

Sing, O Sing! / Psallite Unigenito





The First Noel







And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went. Refrain

This star drew nigh to the northwest,
Over Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay. Refrain



Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon the knee,
And offered there, in His presence,
Their gold, and myrth, and frankincense. Refrain

Then let us all, with one accord, Sing praises to our heavenly Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth of nought, And with His blood mankind hath bought. Refrain

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen







And when they came to Bethlehem Where our dear Saviour lay, They found Him in a manger, Where oxen feed on hay; His Mother Mary kneeling down, Unto the Lord did pray. Refrain

> Now to the Lord sing praises, All you within this place, And with true love and brotherhood Each other now embrace; This holy tide of Christmas All other doth deface. Refrain







child,

0.













The holly bears a prickle,
As sharp as any thorn,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas day in the morn: Refrain





The holly bears a bark,
As bitter as any gall,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all: Refrain



Wassail Song





Good King Wenceslas







'Sire, the night is darker now, And the wind blows stronger; Fails my heart, I know not how, I can go no longer.' 'Mark my footsteps, my good page,

Tread thou in them boldly:
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly.'

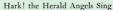
In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed;
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.



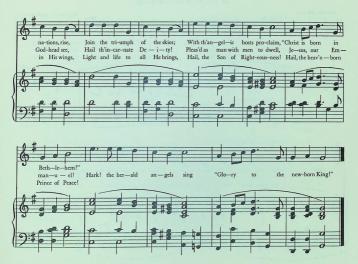
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As Joseph Was A-Walking





He neither shall be clothed in purple nor in pall, But in the fair white linen that usen babies all.

He neither shall be rocked in silver nor in gold, But in a wooden cradle that rocks upon the mold. On the sixth day of January His birthday shall be, When the stars and the elements shall tremble with glee.

As Joseph was a-walking, thus did the angel sing; And Mary's Son at midnight was born to be our King.



The Seven Joys of Mary





The next joy of Mary was the joy of four: That her Son Jesus could turn the rich to poor. Refrain

The next joy of Mary was the joy of five: That her Son Jesus could raise the dead alive. Refrain The next joy of Mary was the joy of six: That her Son Jesus could bear the crucifix. Refrain

The last joy of Mary was the joy of seven: That her Son Jesus could open the gates of heaven. *Refrain*



It Came upon the Midnight Clear





For lo, the days are hast'ning on, By prophet bards foretold, When with the ever-circling years Comes round the age of gold;



When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendor fling, And the whole world give back the song Which now the angels sing.

O Little Town of Bethlehem







We Three Kings of Orient Are







'Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume Breathes a life of gathering gloom; Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Seal'd in the stone-cold tomb.' *Refrain*









Glorious now behold Him arise, King, and God, and Sacrifice; Heav'n sings Allelujah: Alle-Lujah the earth replies. Refrain

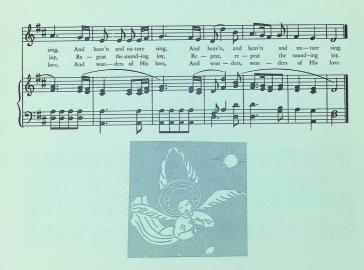












Behold a Branch Is Growing / Es ist ein Ros entsprungen



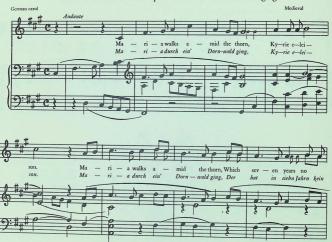


Isaiah hath foretold it In words of promise sure, And Mary's arms enfold it, A Virgin meek and pure. Through God's eternal will, This Child to her is given At midnight calm and still.



Das Röslein, das ich meine Davon Isaias sagt Hat uns gebracht alleine Marie, die reine Magd. Aus Gottes eu'gem Rat, Hat sie ein Kind geboren, Und blieb doch reine Magd.

Maria Walks amid the Thorn / Maria durch ein Dornwald ging





What 'neath her heart doth Mary bear? Kyrie eleison. A little child doth Mary bear, Beneath her heart He nestles there. Jesus and Maria.

And as the two are passing near, Kyrie eleison, Lo! roses on the thorns appear, Lo! roses on the thorns appear. Jesus and Maria.



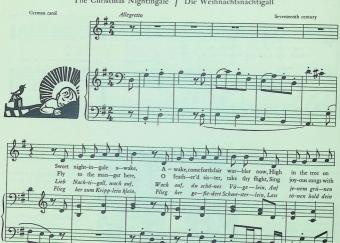
Was trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen? Kyrie eleison.

Ein kleines Kindlein ohne Schmerzen, Das trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen. Iesus und Maria.

Da habn die Dornen Rosen getragn. Kyrie eleison.

Als das Kindlein durch den Wald getragn, Da habn die Dornen Rosen getragn. Jesus und Maria.

The Christmas Nightingale / Die Weihnachtsnachtigall









From Heaven High / Vom Himmel hoch



This day the Virgin bore a son, The best-beloved of ev'ryone, A precious little baby boy, To bring to man delight and joy.

All praise to God enthroned on high, His only Son we glorify. The angel host brings Christian cheer, And singing hails a good New Year.

Euch ist ein Kindlein heut geborn Von einer Jungfrau auserkorn, Ein Kindelein so zart und fein, Das soll eur Freud und Wonne sein.

Lob, Ehr sei Gott im höchsten Thron Der uns schenkt seinen ein' gen Sohn, Des freuen sich der Engel Schar, Und singen uns solch neues Jahr.



Christmas Song / Zu Weihnachten







In darkness black, in death I lay, Thou Sun, dispell'd my sadness. Thou broughtest heav'nly light of day, A life of joy and gladness. O sun, how beautiful Thy rays, The holy words of faith I praise. O Lord, I do believe them.





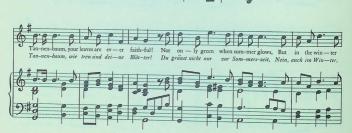
Ich lag in tiefster Todesnacht, Du wurdest meine Sonne, Die Sonne die mir zugebracht Licht, Leben, Freud und Wonne. O Sonne, die das werte Licht Des Glaubens in mir zugericht, Wie schön sind Deine Strahlen!













O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, you are the tree most loved! How oft you've given me delight

When Christmas fires were burning bright!

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, you are the tree most loved!

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, your faithful leaves will teach me That hope and love and constancy

Give joy and peace eternally.

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, your faithful leaves will teach me!

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, du kannst mir sehr gefallen! Wie oft hat nicht zur Weihnachtszeit

Ein Baum von dir mich hoch erfreut!

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, du kannst mir sehr gefallen!

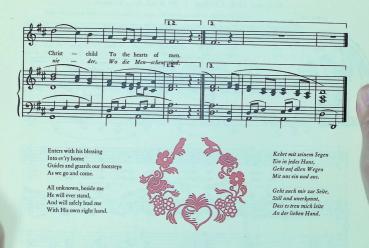
O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, dein Kleid soll mich was lehren! Die Hoffnung und Beständigkeit

Gibt Trost und Kraft zu aller Zeit.

O Tannenbaum, o Tannenbaum, dein Kleid soll mich was lehren!

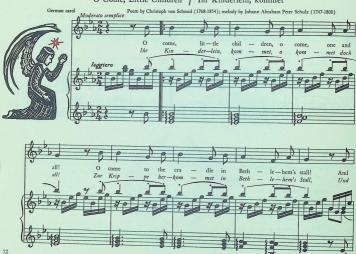
As Each Happy Christmas / Alle Jahre wieder





The Father Brébeuf Hymnal has the largest selection of Eucharistic hymns (by far) of any English-language Catholic hymnal: https://ccwatershed.org/hymn/

O Come, Little Children / Ihr Kinderlein, kommet





O see in the cradle this night in the stall, See here wondrous light that is dazzling to all. In clean lovely white lies the heavenly Child. Not even the angels are more sweet and mild.

O see where He's lying, the heavenly Boy! Here Joseph and Mary behold Him with joy; The shepherds have come, and are kneeling in pray'r, While songs of the angels float over Him there. O seht in der Krippe im nächtlichen Stall, Seht hier bei des Lichtleins hellglänzendem Strahl, In reinlichen Windeln das himmlische Kind, Viel schöner und holder als Engel es sind.

Da liegt es, o Kinder, auf Heu und auf Stroh, Maria und Josef betrachten es froh; Die redlichen Hirten knien betend davor, Hoch oben schwebt jubelnd der Engelein Chor.



Maria on the Mountain / Maria auf dem Berge



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Who's Knocking There? / Wer klopfet an?





The Father Brébeuf Hymnal has the largest selection of Eucharistic hymns (by far) of any English-language Catholic hymnal: https://ccwatershed.org/hymn/





'You come too late.' 'So all the people say.'
'Why do you wait?' 'Ah, only once, today.
For tomorrow comes the Saviour,

To reward your kind behavior.'

'Tis naught to me.' 'Our wretched plight now see.'

'What's that to me?' 'Dear Sir, have sympathy!'

'Hold your peace, plague me no more, Now go! I want to close my door.'



'Ihr kommt zu spüt' 'So heist es überall.'
'Du geht nur, geht' 'O Herr, nur heut einmal!
Morgen wird der Heiland kommen.
Dieser liebt und lohnt die Frommen.'
Geht mich nichts un! 'Seht nuser Elend un!'
'Letget mir enhet drum.' Habe Mildel, lieber Mann.'
'Schwätz nicht viel, lusst mich in Ruh,
Du weht! Ich sehlett ute Tür est.

Shepherds, Up! / Hirten, auf um Mitternacht!







The Darkness Is Falling / Es wird scho glei dumpa





Carol of the Children of Bethlehem / Lied der Kinder zu Bethlehem





Silent Night / Weihnachtslied



The 3rd edition of the Edmund Campion Missal (Sophia Press, 2022) is indispensable for anyone who cares about the Holy Week reforms enacted by Pope Pius XII as it exhaustively explains the similarities and differences between the 1950 Holy Week and the 1962 Holy Week. • https://cowatershed.org/Campion/









Silent Night! Holy Night! Son of God, love's pure light, Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!



Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht
Lieb aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund',
Jesus, in deiner Geburt.

Angels We Have Heard on High / Les Anges dans nos Campagnes







Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the new-born King. Refrain

Bergers, pour qui cette fête? Quel est l'objet de tous ces chants? Quel vainqueur, quelle conquête Mérite ces cris triomphants? Refrain

Ils annoncent la naissance Du libérateur d'Israel, Et, pleins de reconnaissance, Chantent en ce jour solennel! Refrain



Born Is Jesus, the Infant King / Il est né, le Divin Enfant







Bring Your Torches, Jeannette, Isabella / Un Flambeau, Jeannette, Isabelle







Skies are glowing, the night is cloudless, Skies are glowing, come rise from your beds! Hasten all who would see the dear Christ Child Shining and bright as yon lone star! Run! run! put on your finest garments! Run! run! presents for Jesus bring!

It is wrong, when the Baby is sleeping, It is wrong to cry out so loud; Silence, all, as you come near the stable, Lest your noise should waken Jesus! Hush! hush! peacefully now he slumbers; Hush! hush! peacefully now he sleeps.



C'est un tort quand l'Enfant sommeille, C'est un tort de crier si fort. Taisez-vous, l'un et l'autre, d'abord! Au moindre bruit, Jésus s'éveille. Chut! chut! chut! il dort à merveille. Chut! chut! chut! voyez comme il dort!

Doucement, dans l'étable close,
Doucement, venez un moment!
Approchez! que Jésus est charmant!
Comme il est blanc, comme il est rose!
Dol dol dol que l'Enjant repose!
Dol dol dol qu'ilvit en dormant!

Whence, O Shepherd Maiden? / D'où viens-tu, Bergère?







What saw you there, maiden, what saw you? I saw lying cradled there a tiny Child, In the new straw huddled softly It was piled.

Was He fair then, maiden, was He fair? Fairer than the moon is, fairer than the sun, Never in the world was fairer Child shone on.

Nothing more then, maiden, nothing more? Mary, holy mother, nursing Babe at breast, Joseph, holy father, with the cold oppressed. Qu'as-tu vu, bergère, qu'as-tu vu? J'ai vu dans la crèche un petit enfant, Sur la paille fraîche mis bien tendrement.

Est-il beau, bergère, est-il beau? Plus beau que la lune, aussi le soleil; Iamais dans le monde on vit son pareil.

Rien de plus, bergère, rien de plus? Sainte Marie, sa mère, qui lui fait boire du lait, Saint Joseph, son père, qui tremble de froid.

From Starry Skies Descending | Tu scendi dalle Stelle







Thou art the world's Creator, God's own and true Word, Yet here no robe, no fire for Thee, Divine Lord. Dearest, fairest, sweetest Infant,

Dire this state of poverty. The more I care for Thee,

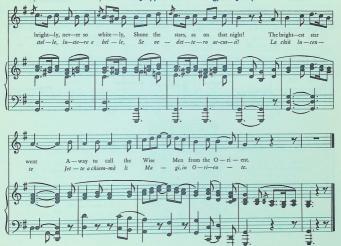
Since Thou, o Love Divine, will'st now so poor to be.

A te, che sei del mondo il Creatore,
Mancano panni e fuoco, o mio Signore
Caro, eletto Pargoletto,
Quanto questa povertà
Piu mi innamora,
Giacche si fece amor povero ancora!

Carol of the Bagpipers / Canzone d'i Zampognari

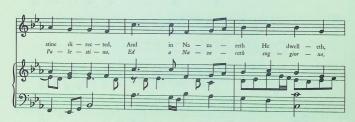


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Herod Dead / Morto Erode







All the village was well treated, Every house with flowers abounding, Jesus lived in this surrounding, As a Nazarene was greeted.



Era il borgo molto ameno, Lieto d'orti fra le case, E Gesù ch'ivi rimase Fu poi detto Nazareno.





Birds of ev'ry forest grove, sing fum, fum, fum, All your fledglings on the bough, Oh, leave them now, oh, leave them now; For to make a downy cover For our Jesus, round Him hover. Fum, fum.

Shining stars from heav'n above, sing fum, fum, fum, Looking down where Jesus cries, Oh, come rejoice; Come and light the night's obscureness With your light and dazzling pureness. Fum, fum, fum.



Pajaritos de los bosques, fum, fum, fum, vuestros hijos de coral abandonad, abandonad y formad un muelle nido a Jesús recién nacido.
Fum, fum, fum.

Estrellitas de los cielos, fum, fum, fum, que a Jesús miráis llorar y no lloráis, y no lloráis, alumbrad la noche oscura con vuestra luz clara y pura.
Fum, fum, fum.

The Rocking of the Child / El Rorro



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A la ru-ru-ru, my Baby dearest, O sleep, my Jesus, sleep my fairest. O night of gladness, night of exaltation, Blessed by sweet Mary, Queen of God's creation. Refrain

A la ru-ru-ru, my Baby dearest,
O sleep, my Jesus, sleep my fairest.
The heav'nly choir in accents sweetly ringing,
The tidings of this wondrous birth are singing. Refrain

A la ru-ru-ru, niño chiquito, Duermase ya mi Jesusito. Noche venturosa, noche de alegría, Bendita la dulce, divina María. Refrain

A la ru-ru-ru, niño chiquito, Duermase ya mi Jesusito. Coros celestiales, con su dulce acento, Canten la ventura de este nacimiento. Refrain





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Refrain

Fair as violets and roses, Baby beguiling, Say what visions surround Thee, why art Thou smiling? Ah, what appears before Thee, Infant so lowly? Softly Thy sweet lips murmur: "Sacrament Holy." Refrain

Refrain

I know not to explain it, sorrow has vanished,
O Thy smile, little Jesus, my care has banished.
Dream, dream, o gentle Master, dreams without number,
Let no affliction trouble Thy peaceful slumber. Refrain

Refrain

Singing birds, flowing fountains, winds gently blowing, Silence, for He is sleeping, checks brightly glowing, Quiet now, while the cradle softly enfolds Him. Refrain, My Holy Child is sleeping, come and behold Him. Refrain

Refrain

O thou tragic foreboding of the sad morrow, Shadow of coming anguish, suff'ring and sorrow, Fly, shadows, while the cradle softly enfolds Him. Refrain

Refrain

Y tú triste presagio que me torturas, almácigo de penas y de amarguras, huye mientras la cuna se balancea. Refrain

Refrain

Manojito de rosas y de aletíes, qué es lo que estás soñando, que te sonríes? Cuáles son tus ensueños, dilo alma mia; mas qué es lo que murmuras? "Encaristía." Refrain

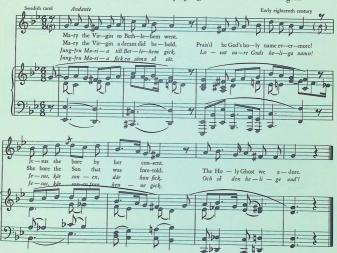
Refrain

Yo no sé lo que es eso, Niño del alma, mas pues esa sonrisa mis penas calma, sigue, sigue soñando mi dulce Dueño, sin que nada te ahuyente tan dulce sueño. Refrain

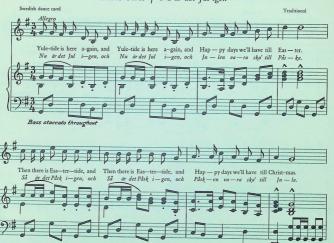
Refrain

Pajaritos y fuentes, auras y brisas, respetad ese sueño y esas sonrisas, callad mientras la cuna se balancea; que el Niño está soñando, bendito seal Refrain

Mary the Virgin to Bethlehem Went / Jungfru Maria till Betlehem gick

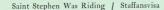


Dance Carol / Nu är det Jul igen



The Father Brébeuf Hymnal has the largest selection of Eucharistic hymns (by far) of any English-language Catholic hymnal: https://ccwatershed.org/hymn/











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The star brightly o'er the town of Bethlehem shone, Refrain Ablaze o'er the house where He lay, the Holy One. Refrain

Saint Stephen to Herod went, the king in his might, Refrain 'One greater than thou has been born this holy night!' Refrain

"Thy words I'll not credit and their truth I'll not know,' Refrain 'Until yonder rooster flies up and starts to crow!' Refrain

The rooster was roasted and in gravy he lay, Refrain
He rose up and crowed as he crowed at break of day! Refrain

Den stjärnan lyste över Betlehems stad. Refrain Men mäst över huset, där barnet det var. Refrain

Sankt Staffan sig inför Herodes måste gå. Refrain I natt är en födder, som bättre är än du. Refrain

Säg, hur skall jag tro dig uppå dessa dina ord? Refrain Förran den hanen han flyger upp och gal. Refrain

Den hanen var stekter och laggder uppå fat. Refrain Han baskade sina vingar så högt som han gal. Refrain

Come All Ye Shepherds / Nesem vám noviny





Let us obey now the heavenly voice! Jesus, our Saviour's born. Come and rejoice! Come every nation, give adoration, Gifts to Him present!

Truly the angels have spoken today: See Mary, Jesus, the stable, the hay! Hear their sweet singing, round us now ringing, Glory on high!



K němužto andělé s nebe přišli, i také pastýři jsou se sěsli, Jeho vitali, jeho chválili, dary nesli.

Žádáme srdečnou zkroušeností, by Jsi nás uvedl do radosti tam kde přebýváš, slávy požíváš, na věčnosti.

Rocking Song / Hajej, nynej, Ježišku



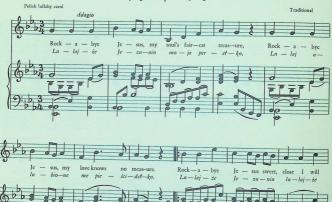


Shepherds, Come A-Running / Przybieżeli do Betleem Pasterze





Rockabye Jesus / Lulajże Jezuniu









Jesus Christ Is Born / Gdy Sie Chrystus Rodzi





p. 0 TERUSALEM RETOICE

The third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudete Sunday," for the introit of the Mass of that day begins with St. Paul's exhortation: "Rejoice (Gaudete) . . . The Lord is nigh" (Phil. 4, 6). At vespers the antiphon Jerusalem gaude is sung in the seventh (mixolydian) mode, the mode of exultation and joy. The words are those of the prophet Zacharias (9, 9).

An accompaniment for this and the following plain song is provided for those who cannot do without. Whenever possible, do not use it. Let the chants rise on their own melodic and rhythmic power.

D. 10 JESUS, REDEEMER OF THE WORLD

This hymn has been called a "song of love, of tenderness, of enraptured contemplation." It originated in the Ambrosian School of the 6th century. Its melody in the first (Dorian) mode still resounds today in the liturgical vesper service at Christmas. It is suggested that two halfchoirs alternate in singing the stanzas, or a smaller group of singers and the entire chorus. Use no accompaniment unless support by an instrument is absolutely needed.

A CHILD IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM

During the Middle Ages many newly created texts, poetry and prose, were added to the ancient Latin liturgy. Frequently new words were inserted in the established phrases, for example: Kyrie-fons bonitatiseleison. Such an insertion (called a trope) was made during the 14th century in the Christmas liturgy, between the priest's words, Benedicamus Domino and the response, Deo gratias at the close of services. In the Christmas poem, Puer natus in Bethlehem, the words still echo the language of the liturgy and the last verse leads into the Deo gratias. To the original 14th-century plain song, an upper voice was added which finally, in many different versions, supplanted the older tune. The Tropus ad Benedicamus, as this carol was called, was sung in Latin and in the vernacular. Our harmonization is by J. S. Bach (Cantata No. 65).

p. 14 HE, WHOM JOYOUS SHEPHERDS PRAISED

Der Quempass geht um ("the Quempass is going around")-this was the expression used in Germany for several centuries to denote the singing and playing of hymns and carols by choirs and congregations on Christmas morning. The choir members sang from the Quempass-Heft ("Quempass Notebook") into which they had carefully copied words and melodies, together with ornaments and drawings referring to the Christmas story.

The first and most important of these songs, called "The Quempass," was bilingual-Latin and German-and its first Latin words explain its title and that of the Notebook: Quem pastores laudavere. Words and melody go back to the 14th century and are to be found in many collections from 1555 on

CAROL OF THE NUNS OF SAINT MARY'S, CHESTER

This carol is a unique combination of a Latin Christmas poem and an English lullaby.

The origins of this early carol and of so many other Christmas cradle songs and Christmas Iullabies lie in the medieval Christmas custom of "rocking the Child," known all over Europe from the 10th to the 16th century. During Christmas Night girls carried a cradle in procession into the church. An image of the Infant Jesus was put into this cradle and to the ringing of bells and singing of carols by the congregation the girls "rocked the child." O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

A carol that belongs not to one nation but to mankind, sung in more than 100 different languages.

The original melody was a plain song used in the monasteries of France. Its present-day version can be traced to a manuscript of John Francis Wade: Cantus Diversi, 1746. It was first printed in 1782.

The English translation (one of more than forty) is Frederick Oakelev's (1802-1880).

O PUBLISH THE GLAD STORY

The original source of this carol is a popular 17th-century French air, Amants, quittez vos chaines. The melody is used for many carols, SING, O SING

This carol is of German origin, and is preserved in the Swedish collection, Piae Cantiones, 1582. There exists no Latin text for the second verse, and a German text is supplied in M. Praetorius' (1571-1621) choral setting on which the present piano part is based.

COVENTRY CAROL This carol was sung in the 15th-century Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors by the women of Bethlehem, just before Herod's soldiers came to slaughter their children. The tune and accompaniment appear here according to the earliest recorded musical version, of 1591. THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

The text of this carol was known in the early 18th century but dates from an earlier period. The tune was collected by Cecil Sharp, rediscoverer of English folksong.

p. 18

p. 16

D. 32

p. 34

p. 12

p. 38 GOOD KING WENCESLAS

This delightful tune was originally a spring song (in *Piae Cantiones*, 1582). J. M. Neale (1818-1866) substituted his Wenceslas poem for the original text. The feast of Saint Stephen is December 26th.

p. 40 WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

William C. Dix's (1837-1898) poem is set to the "Northern Dittye" (known to Shakespeare) "Greensleeves" by Sir John Stainer (1840-1901).

p. 44 AS JOSEPH WAS A-WALKING

This is a traditional carol adapted to an American tune of oral tradition by Richard Chasa and the folksinger Horton Barker of Chilhowie, Virginia. The Trapp Family Singers received the carol from Richard Chase "in gratitude for an unforgettable concert one cold winter evening in Waynesboro, Virginia."

p. 46 THE SEVEN JOYS OF MARY

This carol has many different versions, in England as well as in America. Some enumerate up to twelve joys. The text of the "Seven Joys" goes back to 15th-century England and was one of the most popular carols up to the 18th century.

The magnificent air is set down here as sung from oral tradition by Mr. Kit Williamson, near Rustburg, Virginia. The text has been revised by John Powell and Richard Chase.

P. 54 AWAY IN A MANGER

This is usually called Luther's Cradle Hymn, but neither the words nor the music were written by Luther. The origin of this carol is definitely American, probably in the colony of German Lutherans in Pennsylvania. The poem first appeared in print in Philadelphia in 1885, with the present melody in 1887.

p. 56 TOY TO THE WORLD

The words of this carol are taken from the Psalms of David by the Englishman Isaac Watts (1674-1748). The melody was composed in imitation of the style of G. F. Handel by Lowell Mason of Massachusetts (1792-1872), and first appeared in print in 1839.

p. 60 MARIA WALKS AMID THE THORN

The Gesangbuch of Andernach (1608) refers to this song as one universally known and liked at that time.

The insertion of the words Kyrie eleison in this and in the following carol shows that both have their origin in the first period of the creation of German religious folksongs during the Middle Ages.

FROM HEAVEN HIGH

Martin Luther's "a Children's Hymn of the Christ Child for Christmas Eve," 1535. Our harmonization is by J. S. Bach (from the Christmas Oratorio). The third stanza is explained by the fact that in Luther's time Christmas marked the beginning of the New Year.

CHRISTMAS SONG

In 1736, G. C. Schemelli, cantor at the castle of Zeitz, requested J. S. Bach's cooperation on a hymnal of 954 hymns. It was on this occasion that Bach, inspired by the German choral, as well as by the Italian melodic form, composed this lowly sacred aris.

WHO'S PROCEING THERE?

During Advent and on Christmas Eve, young people go about in the villages of the Austrian Alps, from house to house. They are called the Anglöckler, the bellringers, because in pagan times they rang cowbells and played noisy instruments for the purpose of expelling evil spirits and calling forth fertility of soil. Today they announce the birth of Christ, recite the Gospel story, and sing cards. Given they improve an embary and Joseph seeking admission into an inn in songs like this one.

SHEPHERDS, UP!

The father of the house starts to sing this carol on Christmas Eve, when it is time to get up for Midoligh Mass. The other members of the family gradually join him, at each repeat one step higher. If possible, sing this carol without accompaniment, at least when sung in only two parts. When men's woices are available, they should join in the second half of the carol, taking their notes from the left hand of the piano part. Repeat as often as convenient, always one step higher! In the repeats everybody comes in at the beginning, the tenors singing with the sopronos, the bases with the allos.

THE DARKNESS IS FALLING

One of the prize possessions of nearly every family in the valleys of the Tyrol is the crèche. The figures of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the Three Wise Men, are carved in wood, often by the people themselves, and are to be seen in the "subble," with the city of Bethlehem in the background, mountains and trees, as magnificent as can be afforded. Around these crèches people gasher during all the Christmas season—lasting from the first Sunday in Advent to Candlemas on February 2—and sing oratos and Iulbiard. p. 82

p. 64

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p. 77

p. 80

p. 86 SILENT NIGHT

p. 08

p. 102

The carol was first performed, to the accompaniment of a guitar, on December 24, 1818, in Arnsdorf, near Salzburg, by the priest, Joseph Mohr, who had written the poem, and the teacher, Franz Gruber, who had composed the music. Our version represents the vocal parts of the autograph copy which the composer made later for a friend, and a reduction, in the piano part, of Gruber's orchestration for strings, French horn and organ. The German title, Weihnachtslied, appears on the composer's autograph copy.

FROM STARRY SKIES DESCENDING

This famous poem is set to a much older melody that is closely related to the Neapolitan Carol of the Bagpipers, and to the Neapolitan Canzone di Natale.

CAROL OF THE BAGPIPERS D. 100

During the nine days before Christmas and during the Christmas season, the bagpipers come to Naples from the Abruzzi Mountains and go from house to house playing and singing before the image of the Holy Infant in the creche, or before the madonnas in the street-corner shrines. (Similar customs were once observed in Rome and are still observed in Sicily.) Handel undoubtedly received the inspiration for his aria, "Come unto Him," in his oratorio, The Messiah, from this carol, HEROD DEAD

This is one of the very rare carols that deal with the events reported in the Gospel of St. Matthew (2, 19-23).

FUM, FUM, FUM p. 104

"Furn" should be pronounced "foom" with a short vowel, and the "m" should be hummed with energy, to imitate the sound of guitars and the strumming of string instruments.

THE ROCKING OF THE CHILD p. 106

Nine evenings before Christmas the Mexican people commemorate the difficult journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem in a celebration called Posada, "the Inn." Young and old form a procession to a house, every evening a different one, and ask admission with a song. First they are refused, but upon their telling that it is Mary and Joseph who seek lodging they are admitted. Then follow prayers and more singing and gaiety and dancing. On Christmas Eve, at the last of the Posadas, the Holy Infant is put into the manger and sung to sleep to the sound of El Rorro.

p. 108 A LA NANITA NANA

This is a most unusual carol, combining a tender lullaby with profound thought over a melody and rhythms of popular Latin authenticity. The change from a minor to a major key in the carol is a feature of certain Spanish folksongs, and is also found in some Cuban folksongs (guajira). No "bye, bye" nor "lullaby" would do justice to the Spanish phrases of tenderness toward the little Baby. Therefore we decided to abstain from translating them and keep them, in the English verses, just as they are in the original. MARY THE VIRGIN TO BETHLEHEM WENT

This is an extraordinarily beautiful, early 18th-century melody from Skultuna, Sweden. The invocations repeated in every stanza of this song and also of the Staffansvisa reveal the religious celebrations of the Middle Ages as the original source and inspiration of these songs: Christmas Eve is a night spent in meditation, prayer, and singing, leading into the Midnight Mass. DANCE CAROL

Children and adults dance around their Christmas trees in Sweden, singing this carol. The tune derives from their most popular folkdance, the Hambo

SAINT STEPHEN WAS RIDING

The twenty stanzas of the Staffansvisa, one of the oldest folksongs of Sweden, tell the delightful "Miracle of the Cock," based on a story in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, and end wishing everybody "a glad and happy Yule." The Staffan of the song has the features of two entirely different personalities, those of the deacon, St. Stephen of Jerusalem, whose feast is celebrated on December 26th and therefore closely connected with Christmas, and those of the 11th-century missionary, Staffan, who traveled far in the north. The latter was killed by pagans and an unbroken foal brought his body to Norrala, where a chapel was built over his grave. In all Germanic lands he became the patron of health and of horses, and being confused with St. Stephen of Jerusalem, he shares his honors on December 26th, such as the "Stephen-Cup" drunk to good health, and horseback rides around churches and through villages. On the occasion of such "Stephen's rides" on December 26th, this song is still sung in Skane in Sweden. On Christmas Eve it is sung in Vidtskövle, Sweden. It is one of the most beautiful and interesting melodies among Swedish folksongs. ROCKABYE TESTIS

This is the famous Polish Lullaby Carol. The second part (ad libitum) given here represents the way this carol is sung in Poland. TESUS CHRIST IS BORN

In many Polish churches this carol is sung first by the men; at the "gloria," the women and children join; the second part is ad libitum.

D. III

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b. 124

