

LESSONS & CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

AT THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a Mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed;
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
In whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.

For he is our childhood's pattern;
Day by day like us he grew.
He was little, weak, and helpless;
Tears and smiles like us He knew:
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shared in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

LESSON 1

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

AND WHEN THEY heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise in the afternoon air, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the face of the Lord God, amidst the trees of paradise. And the Lord God called Adam, and said to him: Where art thou? And he said: I heard thy voice in paradise; and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. And to Adam he said: Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth.

HEREFORDSHIRE CAROL

Ralph Vaughn Williams

This is the truth sent from above
The truth of God, the God of love
Therefore don't turn me from your door
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create.
The next thing which to you I'll tell
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes
Till God the Lord did interpose
And so a promise soon did run
That he would redeem us by his Son.

And at this season of the year
Our blest Redeemer did appear



Yet he did live, and here did preach
And many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved
To show us how we must be saved
And if you want to know the way
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

LESSON 2

Genesis 22:15-18

AND THE ANGEL of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, saying: By my own self have I sworn, saith the Lord: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake: I will bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea shore: thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.

LESSON 3

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7

THE PEOPLE THAT walked in darkness, have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen. For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

David Willcocks

Of the Father's heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha, from that Fountain,
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things,
Yet to come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.

By His Word was all created
He commanded and 'twas done;
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
All that breathes beneath the sun,
Evermore and evermore.

He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created,
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
Evermore and evermore.
O how blest that wondrous birthday,
When the Maid the curse retrieved,
Brought to birth mankind's salvation
By the Holy Ghost conceived,
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer
In her loving arms received,
Evermore and evermore.

This is He, whom seer and sibyl
Sang in ages long gone by;
This is He of old revealed
In the page of prophecy;
Lo! He comes the promised Saviour;
Let the world his praises cry!
Evermore and evermore.

Sing, ye heights of heaven, His praises;
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
Let your joyous anthems ring,
Every tongue his name confessing,
Countless voices answering,
Evermore and evermore.

LESSON 4

Isaiah 11:1-4*a*, 6-9

AND THERE SHALL come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp: and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea.

THE LAMB

John Tavener

Little Lamb who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead?
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright?
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee!
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek and he is mild,
He became a little child:
I, a child and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

LESSON 5

Luke 1:26-35, 38

AND IN THE sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who, having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

THE ANGEL GABRIEL

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
With wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
"All hail," said he, "O lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said.
"My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name."
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn.
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

LESSON 6

Luke 2:1-7

AND IT CAME to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, To be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

STILL, STILL, STILL

Still, still, still,
The child is sleeping still.
As Mary holds him to her breast,
Singing gently, bringing rest;
Still, still, still,
The child is sleeping still.

Sleep, sleep, sleep,
The little baby sleeps.
The angels sing and tell the story
Of the child who comes in glory.
Sleep sleep sleep,
The little baby sleeps.

Joy, joy, joy
Our hearts are filled with joy.
The lord has come from heav'n above
To this world to guide and love us.
Joy joy joy,
Ours hearts are filled with joy.

LESSON 7

Luke 2:8-16

AND THERE WERE in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: For, this day, is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will. And it came to pass, after the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath shewed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

BRING A TORCH, JEANNETTE ISABELLA

(English translation)

Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella!
Bring a torch, to the stable call
Christ is born, tell the folk of the village
Jesus is born and Mary's calling.
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is the Mother!
Ah! Ah! Beautiful is her Child
Who is that, knocking on the door?
Who is it, knocking like that?
Open up, we've arranged on a platter
Lovely cakes that we have brought here
Knock! Knock! Open the door for us!
Knock! Knock! Let's celebrate!

It is wrong when the Child is sleeping,
It is wrong to talk so loud.
Silence, now as you gather around,
Lest your noise should waken Jesus.
Hush! Hush! See how He slumbers;
Hush! Hush! See how fast He sleeps!
Softly now unto the stable,
Softly for a moment come!
Look and see how charming is Jesus,
Look at Him there, His cheeks are rosy!
Hush! Hush! See how the Child is sleeping;
Hush! Hush! See how He smiles in His dreams!

LESSON 8

Matthew 2:1-12

WHEN JESUS THEREFORE was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem. Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him. And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them; And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come to adore him. Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

In the year 5199th from the creation of the world, when in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;
In the year 2957th from the flood;
In the year 2015th from the birth of Abraham;
In the year 1510th the going forth of the people of Israel out of Egypt under Moses;
In the year 1032nd from the annointing of David as king;
In the 65th week according to the prophecy of Daniel;
In the 194th Olympiad;
In the year 752nd from the foundation of the city of Rome;
In the year 42nd of the reign of the Emperor Octavian Augustus;
In the 6th age of the world;
While the whole earth was at peace, Jesus Christ, Himself Eternal God and Son of the Eternal Father, being pleased to hallow the world by His most gracious coming, having been conceived of the Holy Ghost, and when nine months were passed after His conception, *was born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem of Juda, made Man, our Lord Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh.*

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born.

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



O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

Arr. David Willcocks

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

God of God,
Light of Light!
Lo! He abhors not the virgin's womb,
Very God, Begotten, not created;
[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 all glory giv'n.
Son of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing;
[Refrain]