

A great and mighty wonder,
a full and holy cure!

the Virgin bears the Infant
with virgin-honour pure:

Repeat the hymn again:

*'To God on high be glory,
and peace on earth to men.'*

The Word becomes incarnate,
and yet remains on high;
and cherubim sing anthems
to shepherds from the sky:

[Refrain]

While thus they sing your Monarch,
those bright angelic bands,
rejoice, ye vales and mountains,
ye oceans, clap your hands:

[Refrain]

Since all he comes to ransom,
by all be he adored,
the Infant born in Beth'lem,
the Saviour and the Lord:

[Refrain]

Collect

Merciful Lord,
cast your bright beams of light upon the Church:
that, being enlightened by the teaching
 of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint
John,
we may so walk in the light of your truth
that we may at last attain to the light of everlasting
life;
through Jesus Christ your incarnate Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Old Testament Reading *Exodus 33.7-11*

⁷Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp; he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. ⁸Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise and stand, each of them, at the entrance of their tents and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. ⁹When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. ¹⁰When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise and bow down, all of them, at the entrance of their tents. ¹¹Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading

1 John 1

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – ²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us – ³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold;
“Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From Heaven’s all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o’er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening 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 splendours fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Gospel

John 21.19b-25

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁹After this Jesus said to Peter, 'Follow me.'

²⁰Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, 'Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?' ²¹When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, 'Lord, what about him?' ²²Jesus said to him, 'If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!' ²³So the rumour spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, 'If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?'

²⁴This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Unto us is born a son,
King of choirs supernal:
See on earth his life begun,
Of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger;
Ox and ass their Owner know
Becradled in a manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
And grievously bewilder,
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild
Hear the Christmas story:
And O that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us up to glory!

O and A and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Le the merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino.

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Gloria in excelsis deo,
Gloria in excelsis deo.

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing;
Yonder shines the infant light:

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations;
Ye have seen His natal star.

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear;
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear.

Though an Infant now we view Him,
He shall fill His Father's throne,
Gather all the nations to Him;
Every knee shall then bow down:

Post Communion

Grant, O Lord, we pray,
that the Word made flesh
proclaimed by your apostle John
may, by the celebration of these holy mysteries,
ever abide and live within us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the Feast of Stephen
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even
Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight
Gathering winter fuel

Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou knowst it, telling
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?
Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain
Right against the forest fence
By Saint Agnes fountain.

Bring me flesh and bring me wine
Bring me pine logs hither
Thou and I shall see him dine
When we bear them thither.
Page and monarch, forth they went
Forth they went together
Through the rude winds wild lament
And the bitter weather

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, good my page
Tread thou in them boldly
Thou shall find the winters rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly.

In his masters step 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.