EARTH HAS MANY A NOBLE CITY

Hymn Devotion – December 11

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-2, 4-5

Micah 5:2

Earth has many a noble city;  
Bethlehem, thou dost all excel;  
Out of thee the Lord from Heaven  
Came to rule His Israel.

Fairer than the sun at morning  
Was the star that told His birth,  
To the world its God announcing  
Seen in fleshly form on earth.

Eastern sages at His cradle  
Make oblations rich and rare;  
See them give, in deep devotion,  
Gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Sacred gifts of mystic meaning:  
Incense doth their God disclose,  
Gold the King of kings proclaimeth,  
Myrrh His sepulcher foreshows.

Jesus, whom the Gentiles worshipped  
At Thy glad Epiphany,  
Unto Thee, with God the Father  
And the Spirit, glory be.

*Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-c.413)*

*Translated by:*

*Edward Caswall (1814-1878)*

We may feel we are too poor, sinful and thus inadequate to house Jesus in our hearts – that is all Jesus really asks of us is to give Him our heart and His strength and love will make our heart adequate for His dwelling place!

1. What does earth have?
2. What city excels?
3. Who came out of Bethlehem?
4. What did He come to do?
5. Verse 2: How is the star described?
6. What did the star do?
7. Who was announcing and to whom?
8. How was Jesus seen?
9. Verse 3: Who came to His cradle?
10. Oblations – offering or gift to deity – How were these oblations described?
11. How were the gifts given?
12. What were the gifts?
13. Verse 4: How are the gifts described?
14. What discloses – tells the secret of God?
15. Who proclaims about gold?
16. What foreshows myrrh?
17. Verse 5: How is Jesus spoke of here?
18. Epiphany is the manifestation of Christ to the Magi according to the biblical account. When did they worship?
19. Who was the glory to be given?

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY

Hymn Devotion – December 12

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-8

Luke 2:6-7

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 Savior holy.

And, through all His wondrous childhood,  
He would honor 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 shareth 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 Heav’n above,  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by,  
We shall see Him; but in Heaven,  
Set at God’s right hand on high;  
Where like stars His children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895)

1. What is David’s royal city?
2. What was there?
3. What happened there?
4. Who was the mother?
5. Who was the child?
6. Verse 2: What did He do?
7. Who is He?
8. What was His shelter and what was His cradle?
9. Who did He live with?
10. How is Jesus described?
11. Verse 3: What would Jesus do through His childhood? (list all)
12. What must Christian children be?
13. Verse 4: What was His childhood pattern? (list all)
14. What did and does He feel?
15. What did and does He share?
16. Verse 5: What will happen at last?
17. How will it happen?
18. Who is that Child so dear and gentle?
19. What does He do?
20. Where to?
21. Verse 6: Where will we not see Him?
22. Where will we see Him?
23. What will His children be adorned and dressed?

THE FRIENDLY BEASTS

Hymn Devotion – December 13

Scripture: Isaiah 1:2-3

Luke 2:6-7

Jesus, our Brother, strong and good,  
Was humbly born in a stable rude,  
And the friendly beasts around Him stood,  
Jesus, our Brother, strong and good.

I, said the donkey, shaggy and brown,  
I carried His mother uphill and down,  
I carried His mother to Bethlehem town;  
I, said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

I, said the cow, all white and red,  
I gave Him my manger for His bed,  
I gave Him hay to pillow His head;  
I, said the cow, all white and red.

I, said the sheep with curly horn,  
I gave Him my wool for His blanket warm,  
He wore my coat on Christmas morn;  
I, said the sheep with curly horn.

I, said the dove, from the rafters high,  
I cooed Him to sleep that He should not cry,  
We cooed Him to sleep, my mate and I;  
I, said the dove, from the rafters high.

Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,  
In the stable dark were glad to tell  
Of the gifts they gave Emmanuel,

The gift He gave Emmanuel.

Traditional English Carol

We each have our means to give to the Lord, can be talents, money or actual material items, like buying or making the needed items for the mission of the Church. Jesus only asks us to give what we can give – at times have to figure out what that gift might be.

1. How is Jesus described?
2. Where was He born?
3. Who stood around Him?
4. Who is our brother, strong and good?
5. Verse 2: How is the donkey described?
6. What did the donkey do?
7. Where was their destination?
8. Who is shaggy and brown?
9. Verse 3: How is the cow described?
10. What did the cow give?
11. What did He lay His head on?
12. Who is white and red?
13. Verse 4: How is the sheep described?
14. What did the sheep give?
15. What did He wear on Christmas morn?
16. Who had the curly horn?
17. Verse 5: Where was the dove?
18. What did the dove do?
19. What did Jesus not do?
20. Who helped the dove?
21. Who was in the rafters?
22. Verse 6: How did they tell their story?
23. Where were the animals?
24. What were they glad to tell of?
25. Who were they for?

GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN

Hymn Devotion – December 14

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-20

Luke 2:10-11

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,

Let nothing you dismay,  
Jesus Christ our Savior

Was born on Christmas Day;  
To save us all from Satan’s power

When we were gone astray.

*Refrain*

*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;  
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

In Bethlehem, in Israel,

This blessed Babe was born,  
And laid within a manger

Upon this blessed morn;  
The which His mother Mary

Did nothing take in scorn

*Refrain*

From God our heavenly Father,

A blessed angel came;  
And unto certain shepherds

Brought tidings of the same;  
How that in Bethlehem was born

The Son of God by name.

*Refrain*

The shepherds at those tidings

Rejoiced much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding

In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethl’em straightaway

The blessed Babe to find.

*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 others doth deface.

Traditional English Carol

(eighteenth century)

The birth of Christ is tidings – news of comfort and joy – we have a Savior – to save us from sin - and He is Christ our Lord!

1. Who can the gentlemen rest in?
2. Who was born and when?
3. What is the mission of Jesus?
4. Where do we go?
5. Verse 2: Where and who was born?
6. Where was He laid?
7. Who was the mother?

1. Verse 3: Who sent the blessed angel?
2. Who did the angels visit?
3. What was the message?
4. Verse 4: What was the reaction of the shepherds?
5. What did they do?
6. What was the weather like?
7. Where did they go?
8. What did they find?
9. Verse 5: What are all in this place to do?
10. How are we to embrace?
11. What defaces all others?
12. The Chorus: What did the tidings – the news of Christ’s birth bring?

THE FIRST NOEL

Hymn Devotion – December 15

Scripture: Luke 2:8-10

The first Noel the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;   
In fields where they lay tending their sheep,   
On a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

*Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,   
Born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east, beyond them far;   
And to the earth it gave great light,   
And so it continued both day and night.

*Refrain*

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 myrrh and frankincense.

*Refrain*

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord;  
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught,  
And with His blood mankind hath bought.

*Refrain*

Traditional English Carol

1. What did the angels say?
2. Who did they say it to?
3. What were they doing?
4. What kind of a night was it?
5. Verse 2: What did they look up and see?
6. Where was it?
7. What did it give earth?
8. How did it continue?
9. Verse 3: What was the light from?
10. Who came from afar?
11. What was their intent?
12. Where were they going to follow it?
13. Verse 4: Where did the star draw to?
14. Where did the star take its rest?
15. What did it do both?
16. Where was the star right over?
17. Verse 5: Who entered?
18. How did they enter?
19. Where did they make their offering?
20. What did they offer?
21. Verse 6: How are we to be?
22. What are we to do?
23. What has He made?
24. What did His blood do?
25. Chorus: What is the repeated word?
26. Who is born?

What wonderful news the angels brought about the creator and savior of the world – We need to be ready to hear and act on this wonderful news today!