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## THE LORD IS COME!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare His room  
And heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Saviour reigns!  
Let men their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy!

No more let sins and sorrows grow  
Nor thorns infest the ground.  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found.

He rules the earth with truth and grace  
And makes the nation prove  
The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love!

—Gordon.

## A DAY OF GREAT JOY

THAT OF THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD  
AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

On Christmas Unite With the Blessed  
Mother of God in Worship of Her  
Divine Infant and Join With Him  
in Love For His Immaculate Mother.

After 4,000 years of expectation the moment arrived for the Messiah to come from heaven and appear on earth to men. The words of the prophet were fulfilled: "The wilderness shall rejoice and shall flourish like the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom and shall rejoice with joy and praise. . . . They shall see the glory of the Lord and the beauty of our God" (Isa. xxxv, 1, 2). The birth of Christ, like His conception, was miraculous; painless and pure, like the budding of the lily or the first rays of the rising sun, as became the sanctity of God the Son and the virginal holiness of His Blessed Mother. The great event which all mankind looked for and which kings and prophets celebrated occurred in profound peace, in the silence and obscurity of midnight. Without observation the King of Glory entered the world that He had made, with no witnesses but the ox and the ass, in the cave stable of Bethlehem. The work of the six days of creation was finished by the birth of the chief member of the human race, the firstborn of mankind. The great cycle of the universe was virtually completed. Slowly it had progressed from primal energy to solid matter, from the inorganic to the sentient being to the rational. Man had been the crown of creation, and now Christ became the crown of humanity. Everything converged upon Him, and in Him the universe in the course of its evolution came back to God, whence it had originally proceeded. Adore God in this wonderful mystery, which holds so important a position in both the cosmical and the supernatural order.

Consider the sentiments of the Divine Infant. He was perfect in mind and body from the first moment of His existence, and He was fully conscious and exercised His mental faculties as He entered into this world. The apostle describes His first acts: "Coming into the world He saith, Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to Me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: Behold, I come . . . that I should do Thy will, O God" (Heb. x, 7-9). Turning His gaze from God to man, His eyes fell first of all on the figure of the blessed among women in adoration before Him. As God He saw in her the chief work of His hand, the one human being never stained by sin and perfectly pleasing in His sight; as Man He saw in her the first and most lasting object of human love, the mother who gave Him life and also the first fruits of His redemption. The next to greet Him was the silent faithful man selected by God as His guardian and foster father and then the shepherds, representing the poor and simple, whom He specially came to evangelize. Let the same be the order of your affections—the Eternal Father, the Son made man, the Virgin Mother, the special servants of God, the poor and lowly and your other brethren.

The consideration of our Lord's Nativity is not complete unless we give due prominence to her who was God's chief agent in the mystery. How can we picture to ourselves adequately her acts and sentiments in those first moments of ecstasy when she saw before her and took in her arms the expected Messiah, the King of Israel, the Son of God? And He was her own Child, He was her beloved One, and she was His. He was to be the possession of the whole world, but in that hour she possessed Him to herself. She was the first to welcome Him. She had to represent the whole human race in receiving Him and paying Him homage. She had no grandeur or wealth or even the common necessities to offer—nothing but her sinless heart and the intensity of her adoration and love, and Jesus was satisfied, for it was a richer treasure and more acceptable welcome than all the kings and priests and populations of the earth could offer. Strive to enter into that Blessed Mother's sentiments, both of natural and supernatural joy; unite with her in worship of her Divine Infant; join with Him in love for His mother—Church Calendar of West Virginia.

### A Prayer.

"O my Father! When I come home from my long journey take me into Thine arms and lay my head down on Thy breast and make me up to me for all

the long absence from Thee, the weary groping after Thee, the fear of never reaching Thee, of which life has been full; for the distance between us caused by my sinfulness; for the miserable service of Thee which is partly my fault and partly, O my Creator, the result of the frail nature Thy hands have made. As I be there folded fast in Thy breast let my first nestling to Thee, my first happy tears, be to Thee the long deferred adoration and thanksgiving and reparation and filial love which in Thy Fatherly compassion Thou wilt account compensation for the past."—Mother Mary Loyola.

### Chicago's Catholic Schools.

It is safe to estimate that between 85,000 and 90,000 young people are attending the parochial schools of Chicago. Moreover, it is an undeniable fact that every Catholic college and academy in Chicago and vicinity has a strikingly increased attendance this year. They have never experienced anything like it in all their history. Several actually have had to reject students because of lack of accommodations. And why? Simply because in open competition with the public schools it has been proved that Catholic schools really educate.—New World.

### EASING HIS BURDENS.

A Story of the Holy Father and a Request For a Dispensation.

An anecdote, guaranteed as perfectly authentic, is given as a typical example of the mode of action of Pius X. A short time since the bishop of a diocese in central Italy, admitted to papal audience, informed the Holy Father that a priest of his diocese had received aims for 200 masses, to be duly celebrated by him, but, falling ill, he had been unable to fulfill his obligation. The priest in question consequently begged the Pope—through intermediary of his bishop—to reduce the 200 masses to the lowest possible minimum.

"Have you the petition in writing?" answered the Pope.

"I have it here with me, Holy Father," replied the bishop.

Pius X. took the paper, saying, "I will forthwith write the rescript." And he wrote beneath the petition, "Remittitur ad conscientiam episcopi," or, in other words, "Let the bishop himself decide under his own responsibility."

"But, Holy Father, I asked a dispensation," said the bishop.

"I know it, but you must concede it yourself, my good friend," replied the Pope. "I do not intend to endure purgatory for you in case the dispensation were wrongfully conceded. Furthermore, should you go to purgatory it is very probable you will meet me there, since they burden me with so many things that it will surely fall to my lot to go thither."

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

It Alone Can Make Authoritative Definition of Christianity.

Writing of the difficulties which beset the people who are trying to bring about some sort of unity among the Protestant bodies of this country, the Morning Oregonian of Portland, Ore., says:

"No man can make a definition of Christianity to suit another man. The Roman Catholic church alone can make an authoritative definition of Christianity, for the Roman Catholic church is Christianity in its historical development and the one Church alone; therefore it is entitled to speak on Christian doctrine with Christian authority. Everything else in the name of Christianity is individual opinion or sectarian dissent. The Roman Catholic Church has kept Christianity alive in the world and keeps it alive now, for Christianity is a body of dogma and doctrine, which is weakened at every point of departure from acknowledged ecclesiastical and historical authority. The Protestantism of the last 400 years is only a feature of the decadence of historical Christianity, which, though it may modify the Roman Catholic conception, yet will wear itself out. The historical Roman Catholic Church is Christianity. Withdraw that—if it were possible—and Christianity as a dogmatic system of theology and a doctrinal system of religion would disappear from the world."

### The Biblical Commission.

The pontifical commission for Biblical studies, comprising Cardinals Rampolla, Satolli, Merry del Val, Segna and Vives y Tuto, has received several new members, the Holy Father having added thereto two Benedictines, Fathers Hospeler and Welker, professors of Sacred Scripture and of Hebrew at the International Benedictine college of St. Anselm; on the Aventine (the latter is likewise author of a valuable Hebrew grammar); Father Lepicier of the Servites of Mary, professor in the Urban College of Propaganda and consultant of the Sacred Congregation of Studies; and Friar Augustine Molini of the Friars Minor. His Holiness has likewise nominated Very Rev. Lorenzo Janssens, rector of the Benedictine college of St. Anselm, second secretary of the commission for Biblical studies, vice Very Rev. David Fleming, O. S. F., compelled to quit Rome by reason of continued ill health and because of his election to the post of provincial of the Franciscans in England.

### Personel.

Edward J. Sullivan of New York city, American Consul to Trebizond, Turkey, is in the city on a visit. He is popularly known in the service as the "Commercial Consul." Before entering the service he was a successful business man in New York, and was prominently identified with the public, social, philanthropic and educational affairs of the metropolis. His efforts in behalf of American commerce and American interests in Trebizond have been very successful. He has recently made a tour of Russia, Turkey, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, England and Ireland.

He has made for his own information a careful and exhaustive study of the commercial and social conditions in those countries. He says that everywhere he travelled President Roosevelt's name was honored and respected. During the progress of his trip on his visiting home he was received in private audience by the Pope, who he says was enthusiastic in his admiration of the president and America. His Holiness presented him with a splendid photograph

containing his autograph and blessing.

### Cook Opera House.

Next week will bring a wealth of Christmas attractions to the Cook Opera House. The headliners will be Staley and Birbeck, in the musical transformation, which they have made famous. In this it will be remembered, there is first revealed a blacksmith shop with the smith and his helper hammering out melodies on wagon wheels and other objects, suddenly the lights are lowered and in two seconds flashed on again. The smith has become a parlor, the smith a pianist and his assistant a young woman. After agreeable music and dancing, there is another two seconds of darkness, and the parlor turns into the smithy, with the smith and his boy stoically working. Other acts will be McCauley's Monkey Circus, The Village Choir, Norton and Nicholson, Keas, Welch and Melrose, comedy acrobats, Aerial Smiths, Dora Pellier and the kinestograph.

### CHRISTMAS AND NEW-YEAR'S EXCURSION BY WEST SHORE R. R.

On Monday, December 19th, and Monday, January 1st, the West Shore will sell excursion tickets to Buffalo and return at the low rate of \$1.10, and to Niagara Falls and return at rate of \$1.25. Tickets good going and returning in regular trains on date of sale. Special package attractions at the Buffalo theatre. Fine winter scenery at Niagara Falls.

### EXCURSION TO BOSTON, \$1.00.

The West Shore R. R. offers a Monday excursion to Boston, Greenfield, Gardner, Fitchburg and Ayer, Mass. Saturday, December 17th, at rate of \$1.00 round trip with return limit of ten days, which will afford an opportunity to spend Christmas and New Year's in New England, and to experience Boston's famous winter scenery at the city's best.