

Hark! The Angels Sing!

By PEGGY SCHIRMER



JUST as hosts of angels sang to the shepherds on the first Christmas, so Christians everywhere and in every age have heralded Christ's birth by singing.

The custom of singing the "Angels Hymn" in celebration of Christmas is ascribed to St. Telesphorus, the eighth Pope (125-36), and angels are a dominate theme in our best-loved and most familiar carols.

"The first Noel tells of the angels' announcement to the shepherds. This song, so appealing because of its simplicity, comes from a shepherd's carol, probably dating from medieval days. Both France and England claim its origin.



THE THIRD verse of "Adeste Fideles" swells out in the glory of the angels' message: "Sing choirs of angels! Sing in exultation! . . . Glory to God in the highest. The identity of the author of this most famous Christmas hymn is still a mystery. The Latin text has been variously ascribed to the time of Diocletian, attributed to St. Bonaventura (1274) and traced to a Cistercian Gradual of the 15th and 16th Centuries.

MAY The Prince of Peace be with you, not only during this Holy Christmas Season, but forever in your hearts.

Manuscripts containing both words and music, found in Great Britain and Ireland, date back only to the 18th Century. Marcus Antonius de Fonseca, chapel master to a king of Portugal, is listed among possible composers of the music, arranged for the Latin text. Dr. Frederick Oakeley, an Anglican clergyman who later became a priest, wrote the familiar English words in 1841. All told there have been 40 translations into English by Catholics and Protestants, and the tune is used for at least 20 Protestant hymns.

The Management and Staff

"Angels We Have Heard On High" probably derives from a French or Flemish 16th-century intonation hymn (a poetic translation from some liturgical text). It seems to have been adapted from the Lauds of the Divine Office for Christmas. The current English version was written in 1837 by Earl Marlat, dean of the School of Theology at Boston University. That same year Edward Shipper Barnes made a similar arrangement from the Gloria.

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CHARLES WENLY wrote the words of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and, in 1883, William H. Cummings, organist at Waltham Abbey, England set the poem to music by adapting Mendelssohn's Festgesang (1840).

Another familiar carol in which the angels' message is recalled, "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," was written by a Weston, Mass. minister, Edmund H. Sears, in 1876.

The Lost King

BY DANIEL E. DORAN

Suggested by Henry Van Dyke's "The Story of the Other Wise Man."

Three kings there came to Bethlehem, Olden and rich and wise were they— Gold did they bring and spices with them And frankincense, for they knew the day And the place where the Mother Mary lay.

Three kings had come from lands afar; In a desert place at the dusk they met. For they knew their guide was to be a star. And they wondered how one king could forget That the journey must start as the sun would set.

Now the fourth king, too, was on his way; He too had galloped at lightning pace, Eager and vigilant as were they Riding the night stars into the day— But he paused to do an act of grace.

For that act of grace he has lost the star By the sunrise light in the morning dew And come to the end of where all roads are, Where brambles thicken and wild thorns grow But never a road or a path he knew.

Then all through his life the king's heart burned With that one desire: to find his King; To his native land no more returned Comfort of home and palace spurned For a weary and fruitless wandering.

Yet never the call of the poor or weak But the king would pause in his eager quest To bind the wounds and kind word speak— Persian or Jew or Mede or Greek, His purse was open at their behest.

At length, after years and his fortune spent He came to that place called Calvary— Still in his heart was discontent— But his King was hanging upon a tree In the throes of His last, long agony.

Now the thunder flashed and the darkness came And over the earth was a bitter pall— For that was the day of immortal shame— And the king heard someone call his name. And they who were near him saw him fall.

So they hear him murmur, "Lord, when did I Give Thee food or drink or Thy shelter be?" And is deemed that words came in reply: "Whatever thou gavest in charity, Though done for the least, it was done for Me."

Then the king's eyes closed as in a dream, For songs of angels his sense beguiled; He was in Bethlehem, so 'twould seem, And Mary was there with the Holy Child For she held Him up to the king and smiled.

So he smiled as one who had found his way, Who had fought the fight and had won the prize; And those who beside him on that day Saw the look of bliss in his grave, gray eyes Knew that he, too, was entering Paradise.

Priests Freed From Tito Prisons Appear Like 'Living Corpses'

Graz, Austria — (NC) — Priests recently released after long years in Yugoslav prisons are "like living corpses . . . human automatons who must be trained and taught like children in order to resume normal life."

These words were used by a Yugoslav bishop to describe two priests he interviewed personally. They were among some 45 Catholic priests and members of religious orders who were released with a large group of so-called "political prisoners" during late November and early December, according to reports received here.

THE BISHOPS were shocked by the condition of the released priests. Some looked like skeletons, and nearly all gave the impression of having suffered terribly.

The majority of the freed priests presumably will be unfit to exercise their former ecclesiastical duties for some time to come.

Railway tickets were supplied by the Communist captors to return the priests to their former places of residence, and they were given also a small amount of money.

Some had spent five or more years in concentration camps without ever having been brought before a court. Others were sentenced in 1945, 1946 and 1947 by Communist "People's Courts."

Long years of suffering left marks upon their minds and personalities. Communist warders, at the behest of the O.Z.N.A. (secret police) had deliberately used methods designed to destroy the personality and all feeling of human dignity.

On their return the priests were afraid to speak in a normal fashion with their bishops, asking over and over whether somebody was behind the door listening to the conversation.

Their captivity had been shared with common criminals. For years the priests were refused any kind of spiritual literature. Many of them, so as not to forget their Latin, wrote down prayers on scraps of paper.

At the beginning of their imprisonment in 1945 and 1946 many were physically beaten and assaulted by the warders. Later on the physical punishment was gradually reduced, but every day they were humiliated afresh for being priests.

THE WORST prison appears to have been the concentration camp in Stolac (Herzegovina) where during the winters of 1945

and 1946, in order to make room for new prisoners, hundreds were driven naked from their beds into the prison yard in freezing weather. Many froze to death or soon died from pneumonia, some begged guards to kill them.

At least eight Franciscans died from pneumonia in the camp at Stolac, and six priests died from exhaustion and cold.

It is estimated that there are still about 100 Catholic priests in Yugoslav jails and concentration camps.

Fourteen of the released priests were from the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina; six from Dalmatia; eight from Slovenia; 11 from Croatia, and four from the province of Vojvodina (known as Banat and Backa during the Hapsburg Monarchy).

They were imprisoned in Lepoglava, Srijemska, Mitrovica, Nova Gradiska, and Pozega, in Croatia; in Maribor and Celje in Slovenia; in Tuzlarn Zenica, Mostar and Stolac, in Bosnia and Herzegovina; in Kotor and Split, in Dalmatia, and in Novi Sad, Vojvodina.

Santa Barred From Christmas Parade

Allentown — Aimed at "Putting Christ Back in Christmas," this city's annual parade dedicated to the spiritual meaning of the holiday even barred Santa Claus from the line of march.

Fifty-six floats in the parade each depicted a religious motif. No commercialism was allowed. After the march, crowds gathered in the Center Square for carol singing. The Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsored the cavalcade.

Central High School Planned

St. Petersburg, Fla. — (NC) — Construction of a new Central High School for Boys will begin here next month. Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley, Bishop of St. Augustine, has announced. The present St. Paul's High School here will become a Girls' High School on completion of the new building.

You Can Win Converts

A Calvinist Professor

By

Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

"Dr. Quirinus Breen, formerly a Calvinist minister, is professor of history at the University of Oregon. It was his scholarly and inspiring lectures on the Middle Ages that gave me an insight into the magnificence of the medieval Church and into the leading role she played in the development of western civilization. That was the first step along the road to my conversion."

Thus did Geraldine M. Meroney of Vanderbilt University tell of what first got her started on the road to Rome. After receiving her B.A. at Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, Miss Meroney continued her studies at the University of Oregon, receiving her M.A. in history. She taught history at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, and did graduate work at Trinity College, Dublin, and Vanderbilt University, leading to a Ph.D. degree.

"At the time," continued Miss Meroney, "I thought the brilliant lectures of Professor Breen were simply giving me an understanding of the Middle Ages. But as I look back, I can see that the outstanding institution of that period was the Church and I was enchanted by the role she played in promoting art, science, literature, sculpture, painting, music and philosophy."

"WHAT I LIKE," many non-Catholics, had naively regarded as the Dark Ages suddenly became the most meaningful centuries in man's history. Unless a student were blinded by fierce anti-Catholic prejudices, he could not resist the enthusiasm of those lectures on St. Augustine, on the great Popes Leo I and Gregory IX, on the awesome St. Bernard, the gentle St. Francis and as a climax to the course on Pope Innocent III and St. Thomas Aquinas.

"The more I studied the growth of Christianity in the Middle Ages," continued Miss Meroney, "the more warmth I felt for the present day Catholic Church. When I had the opportunity to teach medieval history at Willamette University, I felt no need to do more than take the blinders from the eyes of my students."

"But the intellect can understand and accept a great deal without obligating the will to stand for it. That this magnificent Church, whose wisdom and breadth I heartily admired, had provided anything for man other than the enrichment of his cultural history only faintly insinuated itself into my conscious thought."

"When," I venture, "did you begin to feel that the Church had even more than culture, namely, spiritual nourishment for you?"

"It was not until I went to Dublin, Ireland, to study medieval Irish history at Trinity College that I became sharply aware of the vitality of the faith of Catholics. Here was a belief in God firmer, warmer and more joyous than I had known man could experience."

"It is mirrored in the words with which an elderly Irish gentleman, Shamus McEoin, bade me farewell. I hope that we will meet again either in this world or the next, but if there's a choice, I pray God it's the next!"

"That faith permeated all social relationships. It gave to the poor man a dignity and to the rich a gracefulness and to all gentleness of spirit that had the strength of centuries of Catholic belief behind it. The faith of the Irish was the most powerful expression of man's desire for God's love that I had ever held."

"THIS EXPERIENCE" went beyond the intellect. It gave to my intellectual concepts of the Church a meaningfulness they had lacked. But it also drove home to me the need for action. Upon returning to America, I found the same deep, warm faith among Catholics. It was in sharp contrast to the vacillation and hesitance of non-Catholic groups and the pantheism of many of their ministers and seminary professors.

"I called on Father Edgar Kelly at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville for instructions. After hearing my story he knew at once exactly what I needed to buttress the faith growing within me. He received me into his house."

"YOUR ODDSSEY," Geraldine shows that the Church is a house with a hundred gates, with any traveler ready to lead to such, and that the Church is a path that is worn smooth among all these paths is that traveled by the many pilgrims who find their way to the voice within."

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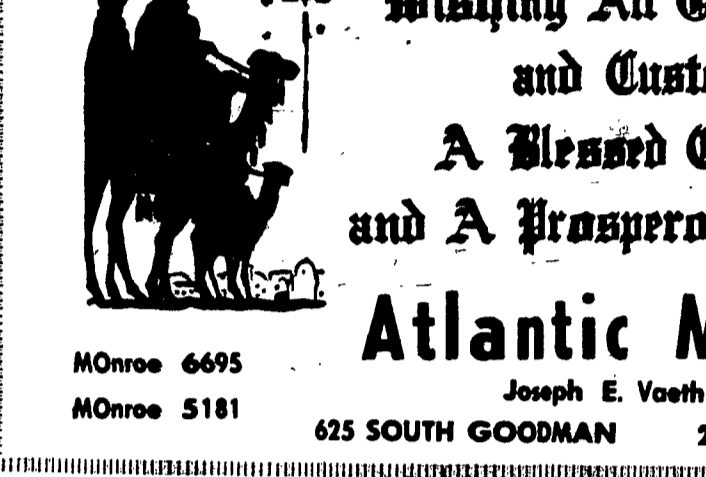
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King, Queen Of Formosa Tribe Baptised

Tajel, Formosa — (NC) — Archbishop Anthony Riberi, Papal Nuncio to China, administered Baptism to the king and queen and 171 members of an aboriginal tribe at Capitan, southern Formosa.

Archbishop Riberi offered a Mass in the Capitan chapel before the baptism. The king, Fururayan, took the baptismal name of Peter. His queen, Mallulu, took the name Mary Rose.

The aborigines are mountain dwellers and were former head hunters. Before being converted to Christianity they had no special gods or organized religion.

For the baptismal ceremonies, the catechumens wore their Sunday clothes of multi-colored, woven cloth and animal skins.

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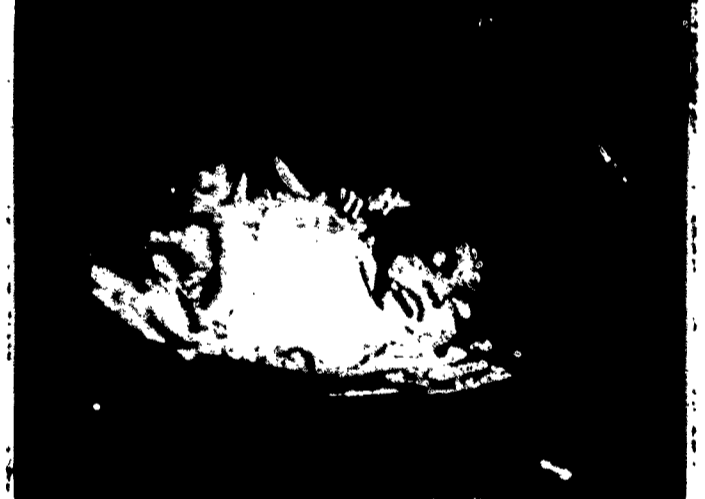
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A BLESSED CHRISTMAS



SINCEREST GREETINGS TO ALL OUR FRIENDS FROM OUR GRATEFUL POOR, THIRTY PRIESTS AND SISTERS, THE MIDNIGHT MASS TODAY OFFERED FOR THE PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, AT THE GREEN IN BETHLEHEM, AND THE MASSES OF TEN OF HIS PRIESTS, WERE FOR YOU AND YOURS. IT IS THEIR THANKS FOR YOUR GREAT KINDNESS TO THEM, ESPECIALLY FOR MASS OFFERINGS UPON WHICH THEY DEPEND ALMOST ENTIRELY FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

MARY Will take special delight in your offerings towards her FATIMA SHRINE CHAPEL during these holy days. We will build it in JORDAN, not far from the scene of the first Christmas night. Your mile with others will do much. A block costs \$10.

JOSEPH Has six years of study at the seminary in Trevin, India. Each year we need \$100 for the cost of his training. His parents are too poor to give him any help. Joseph's endless gratitude and lifelong prayers are yours if you help him with this yearly sum in any installments.

NO ROOM For thousands of families exiled from their homes in Jesu's native land of Palestine. A group of them are huddled in the village of Chevalit, high in the hills of Lebanon. There is NO ROOM FOR JESUS either. These poor people walk miles to the little church down in the valley. We can give Jesu a humble chapel in their midst with \$1,000. Want you help? Give him your mile TODAY. The altar will cost \$75.

INVITE HIM TO YOUR TABLE Set a plate for the Little Lord of Bethlehem at your Christmas table and send the price of one meal to HIM for one of HIS NEEDIEST FAMILIES. It'll be in time for Little Christmas, Jan 6. Perhaps you can send a FOOD PACK \$10. We offer for every gift of \$10 or more for our refugees a ROSARY made by our refugees from OLIVE SEEDS from the Garden of Olives.

SWADDLING CLOTHES Were the only royal purple. The good Holy Land priests are wearing tailored cassocks that are scarcely more than swaddling clothes. The bishops there can provide a new one for \$25. Won't you wrap one around one of Christ's own servants.

A MANGER Was Jesu's crib. Moses was hidden in a basket. SISTER MOSES is hidden from the world for the two years she is training with the Poor Clares in Karuvannur, India. We need the cost of her yearly training, \$100. Won't you help her with \$47?

PUT THE CHILD JESUS IN YOUR WILL DID YOU FORGET SOMEONE AT CHRISTMAS? Here's a chance to make up for that gift you overlooked. Send our GIFT CARD which will tell your friend or loved one that you asked one of our missionaries to offer Mass for them. It will also say that you made a gift to a mission chapel—Name sell \$1 altar glass \$10, lamp \$15, crucifix or Mass book \$25, statue \$30, chalice or ciborium \$40. We'll send it direct and enclose a certificate of PRESSED FLOWERS FROM THE HOLY LAND.

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