



The London Provincial
Carol Service

**Provincial Priory
of London**

*The United Religious, Military and
Masonic Orders of the Temple and of
St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine,
Rhodes and Malta in England and
Wales and Provinces Overseas*



ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 should be
kind, obedient, good as he.
4. 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 feelth for our sadness,
and he shareth in our gladness.
5. 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 that place where he is gone.
6. Not in that poor and 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.



BIDDING PRAYER

Belovèd in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore, let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this City and Diocese of London.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or, who by sin, have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

May the Almighty God bless us with His grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all.

Amen.



ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT ALL CHRISTIANS SING

1. On Christmas night all Christians sing,
to hear the news the angels bring.
On Christmas night all Christians sing,
to hear the news the angels bring,
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful King's birth.
2. Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad.
Then why should we on earth be so sad,
since our Redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free,
all for to gain our liberty?
3. When sin departs before his grace,
then life and health come in its place.
When sin departs before his grace,
then life and health come in its place;
heaven and earth with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.
4. All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night.
All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night;
'Glory to God and on earth peace,
Goodwill to all shall never cease.'

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 3:8-15

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the children of earth shall finally overcome the Evil One



THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

1. The holly and the ivy
Now both are full well grown;
of all the trees in the wood,
the holly bears the crown:

*O the rising of the sun,
and the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ
sweet singing in the choir.*

2. The holly bears a blossom
as white as lily-flower;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
to be our sweet Saviour:
3. The holly bears a berry
as red as any blood;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
to do poor sinners good:
4. The holly bears a prickle
as sharp as any thorn;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
on Christmas day in the morn:
5. The holly bears a bark
as bitter as any gall;
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
for to redeem us all:
6. The holly and the ivy
Now both are full well grown;
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown:

SECOND LESSON: Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his children shall all nations of the earth be blessed



GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay,
for Jesus Christ our Saviour
was born upon this day,
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy,*
2. 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:
3. The shepherds at those tidings
rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding
in tempest, storm and wind;
and went to Bethlehem straightway
this blessed babe to find:
4. But when to Bethlehem they came,
whereat this infant lay,
they found him in a manger,
where oxen feed on hay;
his mother Mary, kneeling down,
unto her Lord did pray:
5. Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true brotherhood
each other now embrace.
This holy tide of Christmas
all others doth efface:

THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 9:2,6,7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

1. 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 all,
from heaven's all-gracious King!';
the world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.
2. 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.
3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angels strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the words of peace they bring:
O hush the noise, of human strife,
and hear the angels sing.
4. 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.

FOURTH LESSON: Micah 5:2-4

The Prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem



O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
2. O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to all on earth.
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessing of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him still
the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord, Emmanuel.

FIFTH LESSON: Luke 1:26-33, 38

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT

1. 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.
2. Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia;
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!
3. Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

SIXTH LESSON: Luke 2:1-7

Luke tells of the birth of Jesus



UNTO US IS BORN A SON

1. Unto us is born a Son,
King of Quires supernal:
see on earth His life begun,
of lords the Lord eternal,
of lords the Lord eternal.
2. Christ from heav'n descending low,
comes on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know,
becradled in a manger,
becradled in a manger.
3. This did Herod sore affray,
and grievously bewilder;
so he gave the word to slay,
and slew the little childer,
and slew the little childer.
4. Of his Love and mercy mild,
this the Christmas story;
O that Mary's gentle child
might lead us up to glory,
might lead us up to glory.
5. We adore him A and O
cum cantibus in choro;
let the merry organ go,
benedicamus Domino,
benedicamus Domino.

SEVENTH LESSON: Luke 2:8-16

The shepherds go to the manger

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.
2. "Fear not," said he, (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind),
"glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind.
3. "To you, in David's town, this day,
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:
4. "The heavenly Babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing clothes,
and in a manger laid."
5. Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels, praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:
6. "All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace!
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to earth
begin and never cease."

EIGHTH LESSON: Matthew 2:1-11

The Wise Men are led by the Star to Jesus



WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE

1. We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

2. Born a King on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring, to crown him again
king for ever, ceasing never
over us all to reign:
3. Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayers and praising gladly raising,
worship him, God Most High:
4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb:
5. Glorious now, behold him arise,
King, and God, and Sacrifice!
Heav'n sings alleluia:
alleluia the earth replies:

NINTH LESSON: John 1:1-14

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

1. O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold Him,
born the King of Angels:

*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

2. God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God,
begotten, not created:

3. See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps:

4. Lo! Star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
we to the Christ-child
bring our hearts oblations:

5. Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?

6. Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God
in the highest:

7. Yea, Lord, we bless thee,
Born for our salvation,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:



PRAYERS

Almighty God,
who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of thy only Son, Jesus Christ:
grant that as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him
when he shall come to be our judge;
who liveth and reigneth with thee
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Let us pray for peace among the nations; nation shall not lift sword against nation.
Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: kindle we pray thee, in the hearts of all men the true love of peace; and guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquillity thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us pray for God's blessing on this Provincial Priory; give me understanding and I shall keep thy law.

Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this Provincial Priory of London of Knights of the Temple and drive far from it and its members all snares of the enemy, that it and they may for ever defend and maintain the Holy Christian faith. Let thy holy angels dwell therein to preserve us in peace; and let thy blessing be upon us evermore through Jesus Christ our Lord and heavenly Captain.

Amen.

Let us pray for our relations and friends; let thy fatherly hand ever be over them.

And let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them.

Remember, O Lord, in thy mercy, all those whom we love, all who love us, all who have done us good and all for whom our prayers are due; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE COLLECT OF THE SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM EYE HOSPITAL GROUP

Almighty God,
whose blessed Son Jesus Christ went about doing good
and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people;
bless, we beseech thee, the work of the St John Eye Hospital Group.
Especially accept our thanks for its work
done with skill and faithfulness during this troubled time;
and grant that it may continue to be a centre of light and healing
to all who come within its walls
and to those touched by its outreach;
through Him who is the Light of the World
and the Great Physician, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE BLESSING

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
be with you and remain with you and with all whom you love
now and for evermore.

Amen.



HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

1. Hark! the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all you nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem':

*Hark! The herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.*

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the Everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased in human form to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings:
mild, he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die;
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth:



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St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group

The Eye Hospital Group, the principal charity of Great Priory for over a century, is the only charitable provider of expert eye care in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, treating patients regardless of ethnicity, religion or their ability to pay. The flagship Hospital in Jerusalem and facilities in Anabta, Hebron and Gaza plus the Mobile Outreach Programme, which travels across the West Bank bringing eye care to isolated communities, ensures the greatest possible reach and impact in the region. The main hospital in East Jerusalem has been operating for 137 years. The hospital is the main provider of eye care for Palestinians in East Jerusalem and sees many of the most complex eye cases that are referred from medical centres across the West Bank and Gaza.

St. John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group – Registered Charity Number 1139527

**The Provincial Prior encourages Knights of the Province
to donate to the Eye Hospital, either through the collection of alms
at this service or at any time by scanning this code:**

