

# Christmas Lessons and Carols

## Processional Hymn 102 (vs 1,2,5,6) *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, the scorned, the lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.

5 And our eyes at last shall see him,  
thro' his own redeeming love;  
for that child who seemed so helpless  
is our Lord in heaven above:  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

6 Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing round,  
we shall see him, but in heaven,  
where his saints his throne surround:  
Christ, revealed to faithful eye,  
set at God's right hand on high.

## Bidding Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this church glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and this city of Johnstown.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us saying:

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil. Amen

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

## Lesson 1 Genesis 3: 1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God say, “You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?”’ The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.”’ But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ He said, ‘I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.’ He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?’ The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.’ Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this that you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent tricked me, and I ate.’ The Lord God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.’

## Hymn 60

### *Creator of the stars of night*

Creator of the stars of night,  
Your people's everlasting light,

O Christ, Redeemer of us all,  
We pray You, hear us when we call.

In sorrow that the ancient curse  
Should doom to death a universe,  
You came, O Savior, to set free  
Your own in glorious liberty.

When this old world drew on toward night.  
You came, but not in splendor bright.  
Not as a monarch, but the child  
Of Mary, blameless mother mild.

At Your great name, O Jesus, now  
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;  
All things on earth with one accord.  
Like those in heaven, shall call You Lord.

Come in your holy might, we pray,  
Redeem us for eternal day;  
Defend us while we dwell below  
From all assaults of our dread foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,  
And God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Praise, honor, might, and glory be  
From age to age eternally.

## Lesson 2 Isaiah 7:10-15

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.’

## Hymn 56

## *O come, O come Emmanuel*

1 O come, O come, Immanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who orderest all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show  
and teach us in her ways to go. Refrain

3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times didst give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain

4 O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
free them from Satan's tyranny  
that trust thy mighty power to save,  
and give them victory o'er the grave. Refrain

5 O come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heavenly home  
Make safe the way that leads on high  
And close the path to misery Refrain

6 O come, Thou Day-Spring from on high,  
and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
And death's dark shadows put to flight Refrain

7 O come, desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of all mankind

Bid Thou our sad divisions cease  
And be Thyself our King of peace Refrain

8 O come, O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear Refrain

## **Lesson 3 Isaiah 11: 1-11**

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,

The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain;

for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

### **Hymn 81**

### *Lo, how a rose e'er blooming*

1 Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming  
From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming  
As seers of old have sung.  
It came, a blossom bright,  
Amid the cold of winter  
When half spent was the night.

2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,  
The Rose I have in mind:  
With Mary we behold it,  
The virgin mother kind.  
To show God's love aright  
She bore to men a Savior  
When half spent was the night.

3 This Flower, whose fragrance tender  
With sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels in glorious splendor  
The darkness everywhere.  
True man, yet very God,  
From sin and death now save us  
And share our every load.

### **Lesson 4 Luke 1:26-35. 38**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be

great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

### **Hymn 265**

### *The angel Gabriel from heaven came*

1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came  
His wings as drifted snow his eyes as flame  
"All hail" said he "thou lowly maiden Mary,  
Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

2. "For know a blessed mother thou shalt be,  
All generations laud and honor thee,  
Thy Son shall be Emanuel, by seers foretold  
Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head  
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,  
"My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name."  
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

4. Of her, Emanuel, the Christ was born  
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn  
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:  
"Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

### **Lesson 5 Matthew 1: 18-24a**

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had

resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him;

### Hymn 110

### *The snow lay on the ground*

1 The snow lay on the ground,  
The stars shone bright,  
When Christ our Lord was born  
On Christmas night.  
Venite adoremus Dominum;  
Venite adoremus Dominum.

Refrain:

Venite adoremus Dominum;  
Venite adoremus Dominum;  
Venite adoremus Dominum;  
Venite adoremus Dominum;

2 'Twas Mary, daughter pure of holy Anne,  
that brought into this world the God made man.  
She laid Him in a stall  
At Bethlehem;  
The ass and oxen shared  
The roof with them. Refrain

3 Saint Joseph, too, was by  
To tend the Child;  
To guard him, and protect  
His mother mild;  
The angels hovered round,  
And sang this song,  
Venite adoremus Dominum. Refrain

4 And thus that manger poor  
Became a throne;  
For He Whom Mary bore  
Was God the Son.  
O come, then, let us join  
The heavenly host,  
To praise the Father, Son,  
And Holy Ghost. Refrain

### Lesson 6 Luke 2: 1-7

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

### Hymn 79 (vs 1,2,3,&5)

### *O little town of Bethlehem*

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

For Christ is born of Mary  
And gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love  
O morning stars together

Proclaim the holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King  
And Peace to men on earth

How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is given  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings 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

O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in  
Be born to us today  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell  
O come to us, abide with us  
Our Lord Emmanuel  
O come to us, abide with us  
Our Lord Emmanuel

### **Lesson 7 Luke 2: 8-16**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

### **Hymn 94**

### ***While shepherds watched their flocks by night***

1 While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
an 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 all mankind.

3 "To you, in David's town, this day  
is born of David's line  
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:

4 "The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all simply wrapped in swaddling 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 on the earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to men  
begin and never cease."

## Lesson 8 Matthew 2: 1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:  
"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### Hymn 128

#### *We three kings*

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

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,  
star with royal beauty bright,

westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign. [Refrain]

3 Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worshiping God on high. [Refrain]

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]

5 Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
sounds through the earth and skies. [Refrain]

## Lesson 9 Hebrews 1:1-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say ,  
'You are my Son; today I have begotten you'?  
Or again, 'I will be his Father, and he will be my Son'?  
And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,  
'Let all God's angels worship him.' Of the angels he says, 'He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.'

But of the Son he says,  
'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,  
and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.  
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;  
therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'  
And,  
'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,  
and the heavens are the work of your hands;  
they will perish, but you remain;  
they will all wear out like clothing;  
like a cloak you will roll them up,  
and like clothing they will be changed.  
But you are the same,  
and your years will never end.'

### Hymn 99

### *Go tell it on the mountain*

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. [Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

3 Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

### The Blessing

### Hymn 109

### *The first noel*

The first "Nowell" the angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Refrain Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!  
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:  
O'er 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 their 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 nought,  
And with His blood our life hath bought. Refrain

