



ANONYMOUS 4

Sunday, November 29 at 7 p.m.

Monday, November 30 at 8 p.m.



*Friends of
Music at
Dumbarton
Oaks*

ANONYMOUS 4

The Cherry Tree: Songs, Carols, and Ballads for Christmas

November 29th & 30th, 2009

Ruth Cunningham | Marsha Genensky

Susan Hellauer | Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek

SEQUENCE: *Prophetarum presignata*

CAROL: *Nowell syng we bothe al and sum*

CAROL: *Alma redemptoris mater*

FOLK HYMN: *The Shepherd's Star*



CAROL: *Newell: Tydings trew*

CAROL: *Mervele nocht iosep*

CAROL: *Syng we to this mery cumpane*

SONG: *Qui creavit celum*

FOLK HYMN: *A Virgin Unspotted*



CAROL: *As y lay up on a nyzt*

CAROL: *Now may we syngen*

BALLAD CAROL: *Lullay my child: This ender nithgt*

FOLK HYMN: *Star in the East*



CAROL: *Veni redemptor gencium*

The Cherry Tree Carol

SEQUENCE: *Salve mater misericordie*

CAROL: *Hail mary ful of grace*

FUGING TUNE: *Bethlehem*

Please hold applause until the end of each section.

PROGRAM NOTES

The Cherry Tree Carol is a traditional American piece in which Joseph doubts the divine origin of Mary's pregnancy. Jesus then miraculously speaks from within Mary's womb, causing a cherry tree to bend and offer his mother its fruit. This miracle ballad was spoken or sung in England around 1400 during the *Coventry Plays* for the feast of Corpus Christi, and also made its way into British carols of the mid-15th century. Our program blends **The Cherry Tree Carol** and the carol-ancestors of that story with other medieval British carols and British-rooted American songs.

We now associate the word *carol* with Christmas, but in the 15th century, carols were written to celebrate other feasts, saints, and occasions, or to teach moral lessons. The origin of the medieval British carol has been the subject of much musicological debate: were carols composed to accompany liturgical processions, or were they church-sanctioned alternatives to rude and rowdy dance songs? If the latter, it stands to reason that many of these songs would be appropriate for Christmastime, which was a season of riotous festivity and unruly celebration.

Fifteenth-century carols have a recurring *burden* (refrain) sung by the chorus, and a number of *stanzas* (verses) for the soloist. Some of our carols also have a pre-burden to cue the chorus. Most, like **Nowell syng we, Alma redemptoris mater, Hail mary, Syng we to this mery cumpane**, and **Now may we syngen**, are simple and straightforward with rich, triadic English harmonies. Others, such as **Mervele nocht iosep** and **Veni redemptor gentium**, exhibit the intricate polyphonic writing characteristic of 15th-century art songs. We have occasionally created *fa-burden*, filling in duets with a line that creates the triadic harmonies typical of the time. Our program also includes the monophonic 15th-century ballad carols **Newell: Tydings trew** and **Lullay my child: This ender nithgt**. The latter is a reconstruction using surviving refrain music to set the text as a ballad.

Qui creavit celum is the well-known Carol of the Nuns of Chester. While not technically a carol in the burden-stanza sense, it has lullaby refrains such as are often found in 15th-century carols. The anonymous Irish sequences **Prophetarum presignata** and **Salve mater misericordie** are taken from the Dublin Troper, a late 14th-century Irish manuscript. Sequences are normally sung after the Alleluia of the Mass, and are composed in double versicle, or couplet fashion.

Anglo-American sacred and secular music traveled to the New World from the British Isles along with the colonists. **The Cherry Tree Carol**, which has flourished in oral tradition throughout the centuries, is still widely sung in both America and Great Britain. Our version of this piece was sung for the folk song collector Cecil Sharp by William Wooton of Hindman, Kentucky, in 1917.

A Virgin Unspotted came to America in the second quarter of the 18th century as part of a movement to "improve singing" in the Colonies. We sing a simple three-part version of the tune, with a new harmonization of William Knapp's arrangement from *Wyeth's Repository of Music, Part Second* (1813).

For his **Bethlehem**, the 18th-century New England tunesmith William Billings set a popular British psalm text to a joyous, four-part, imitative fugal tune. **The Shepherd's Star** and **Star in the East** are arranged in spare, archaic-sounding, three-part settings vaguely reminiscent of medieval harmony. Each of these anonymously-composed folk hymns made its first appearance in print in the mid-1820s. We sing them as they appear in the famous 19th-century tunebook, *The Southern Harmony* (1835).

—Marsha Genensky and Susan Hellauer

Renowned for their unearthly vocal blend and virtuosic ensemble singing, the four women of **Anonymous 4** combine historical scholarship with contemporary performance to create their magical sound. The ensemble has performed in major concert series and at festivals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, including appearances at Tanglewood, Wolftrap, BBC Proms, Edinburgh Festival, and the Brisbane Biennial. Anonymous 4's listeners have purchased nearly two million copies of their eighteen recordings on the Harmonia Mundi label.

Anonymous 4 has appeared on a wide range of radio and television programs, including NPR's *All Things Considered*, *Performance Today*, and *Weekend Edition*, MPR's *St. Paul Sunday*, WETA's *Millennium of Music*, Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*, and ZDF's *Erstklassich!* (Germany). The ensemble has been featured on A&E's *Breakfast with the Arts*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, and Australian ABC's *Access All Areas*, as well as on Discovery Health Channel and Fox News Channel. For more information, visit www.Anonymous4.com.

Raised in Millbrook, NY, **Ruth Cunningham** has spent most of her adult life in Manhattan. She received a bachelor's degree in Performance of Early Music from the New England Conservatory, and is certified as a cross-cultural music and healing practitioner. She specializes in improvisational sacred music from various spiritual traditions in both liturgical and concert settings. Her most recent solo CD, *Light and Shadow*, encompasses a mixture of music including chants from Western and Eastern traditions as well as her own compositions and improvisations. For more information, visit www.ruthcunningham.com.

Marsha Genensky grew up in California in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains. With an M.A. in Folklore and Folklife from the University of Pennsylvania, Marsha handles Anonymous 4's American music research, and previously acted as music director for the group's recordings *American Angels* and *Gloryland*. In addition to Anonymous 4, Marsha performs in a new trio with Scott Nygaard and Crow Molly, and also with fiddle and guitar masters Darol Anger and Scott Law.

While earning a B.A. in music as a trumpet player at Queens College, **Susan Hellauer** developed a fascination with medieval and Renaissance vocal music that ultimately led her to convert to singing. She then pursued advanced degrees in musicology from Queens College and Columbia University. Susan handles Anonymous 4's medieval music research, and is an adjunct assistant professor of music at Queens College, CUNY, where she also directs the Collegium Musicum. Susan leads Chant Camp workshops throughout the US (www.ChantVillage.com), plays Baroque guitar and clawhammer banjo, and is proud to be a volunteer EMT with the Nyack Community Ambulance Corps.

Jacqueline Horner-Kwiatek comes from the small village of Monkstown, in Northern Ireland. After getting a joint honors degree in Music and English from Queens University Belfast, she moved to London and became a professional singer known for her willingness to sing all types of music, from baroque and classical opera and oratorio to the extremes of new music. She now lives in New York, and in addition to her recording and touring activities with Anonymous 4, she has a busy career as a soloist, appearing with such distinguished ensembles as the Washington Bach Consort, Carmel Bach Festival, Parthenia, and Albany Symphony. For more information, visit www.jacquelinehorner.com.



Prophetarum presignata virgo vaticinio
super celos exaltata mater es a filio.

O benedicta circumamicta varietate
te veneratur quem imitatur angelis amica.

Virginum pudica concio stella pudicie beata
virgo plena gaudio.

Nowel syng we bothe al and sum
now rex pacificus ys ycome.

Exortum est in love and lysse
now cryst hys grace he gan us gysse
and with hys body us bou3t to blysse
bothe alle and sum.
Nowel syng we . . .

De fructu ventris of mary bryght
both god an man in here alight
owt of dyssese he dyde us dyght
bothe al and sum.
Nowel syng we . . .

Puer natus to us was sent
to blysse us bou3t, fro bale us blent
and ellys to wo we hadde y went
bothe al and sum.
Nowel syng we . . .

Lux fulgebit with love and ly3t
in mary mylde his pynon py3t
in here toke kinde with manly my3t
bothe al and sum.
Nowel syng we . . .

Gloria tibi ay and blysse
God unto his grace he us wysse
the rent of heven that we not mysse
bothe al and sum.
Nowel syng we . . .

Foretold of the prophets, prophesied virgin:
you are exalted above the heavens by your son.

O blessed one, clothed all about in colors,
you are adored, lady, whom the angels imitate.

A crowd of chaste virgins bless the star of chastity,
virgin filled with joy.

Nowel sing we both all and some
now the peace-bringing King has come.

He has arisen in love and joy:
now Christ has begun to prepare us for his grace
and with his body has ransomed our bliss,
both all and some.
Nowel sing we . . .

From the fruit of the womb of Mary bright
both God and man alight in her.
He has brought us out of our affliction,
both all and some.
Nowel sing we . . .

A newborn boy was sent to us;
he brought us to bliss and eased our suffering;
otherwise we would have come to grief,
both all and some.
Nowel sing we . . .

The Light will shine with love and brightness:
in gracious Mary he planted his standard.
In her, he took human form with righteous dominion,
both all and some.
Nowel sing we . . .

Glory be to you, and ay, heavenly bliss:
God shows us the way to his grace
so that we will not miss heaven's reward,
both all and some.
Nowel sing we . . .

Alma redemptoris mater

As I lay up on a nyth
my thowth was on a berd so brith
that men clepyn marye ful of myth
redemptoris mater.

Alma redemptoris mater.

[T]o here cam gabryel wyth lyth
and seyde heyl be thou blysfyl wyth
to ben clepyd now art thou dyth
redemptoris mater.

Alma redemptoris mater.

At that wurd that lady byrth
anon consevyd god ful of myth
than men wyst well that sche hyth
redemptoris mater.

Alma redemptoris mater.

Jhesu that syttyst in hevne lyth
graunt us to comyn beforn thi syth
wyth that berde that is so brith
redemptoris mater.

Alma redemptoris mater.

Kind mother of the redeemer

As I took my rest one night
my thought was on a maiden so bright
whom men call Mary, full of virtue,
the mother of the redeemer.

Kind mother of the redeemer.

To her came radiant Gabriel
and said: Hail be to you, blessed creature!
Now are you chosen to be called
the mother of the redeemer.

Kind mother of the redeemer.

At that word, the bright lady
conceived God almighty;
then mankind yearned to call her
the mother of the redeemer.

Kind mother of the redeemer.

Jesus, you who sit in the light of heaven,
grant that we may appear before you
and that maiden who is so bright,
the mother of the redeemer.

Kind mother of the redeemer.

The Shepherd's Star

1. Hail the blest morn! See the great Mediator,
Down from the regions of glory descend!
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo! for his guard, the bright angels attend.
2. Cold on his cradle, the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies his bed with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Wise men and shepherds before him do fall.
3. Low at his feet we in humble prostration,
Lose all our sorrow and trouble and strife;
There we receive his divine consolation,
Flowing afresh from the fountain of life.
4. Star of the morning, thy brightness declining,
Shortly must fade when the sun doth arise;
Beaming refulgent, his glory eternal
Shines on the children of love in the skies.

Newell: Tydings trew

*Newell, newell, newell, newell,
This is the song of angel gabryel.*

Tydings trew ther be cum new sent ffrome the
trynyte
be gabryel to nazaret cite of gallilye
a clene maydyn and pure virgin thorow hyr
humylyte
conseyvyd the second person in divynyte.

Wan he first presentyd was be for hyr fayir vyssag
with most demuer and godly wysse to hyr he
ded omag
and sayd lady of hevyn so high that
lordys heritag
the wych of the born wyll be i am sent
of messag.

Sodenly abashyd trwly but not all thing
dessmayd
with mynd dyscret and meke speryt to the
angel sche sayd
be wat maner shuld y child ber the wych ever a mayd
have levyd chast al of my lyve and never
man assayd.

Than a gayn to owre lady thus answered the angell
O lady der be of good chaire [and dred the]
nev'r a dell
thow shalt [receve] in thy body mayd godes very selle
in whos berth both hevyn and erth shall
joye emanuel.

Yt ys not vi monthys past thi cossyn Elyzabell
that was barene consevyd a chyld trewthe
yt ys [y] the tell
sythe she in age why not in yought ye may
conseyve [as well]
yff god wyl whome ys possybyl to have don
every dell.

Than a geyn to the angell she aunswerd womanly
wat so ev'r my lord comand me do I wyll
obey meekly
ecce sum umilima ancilla domini
secundum tuum verbum fiat mychi.

Nowel: True tidings

*Nowel, nowel, nowel, nowel,
This is the song of angel Gabriel.*

True tidings have just arrived, sent from the
Trinity
[brought] by Gabriel to Nazareth, city of Galilee.
A clean maiden and pure virgin, through her
humility,
has borne the second person in divinity
[in the trinity].

When he first presented himself before her fair face,
in the most dignified manner, he paid
homage to her
and said: lady of heaven so high, the [rightful]
inheritance of the Lord
who will be born of you. I am sent with
this message.

Suddenly, truly surprised, but not at all
dismayed,
with good sense and humble spirit, she asked
the angel:
by what manner shall I bear a child,
when I have been chaste all my life and have no
experience of man?

Then, the angel replied to our lady:
O lady, be glad! You need have no fear at all.

You shall carry in your virgin body God himself
at whose birth both heaven and earth shall
praise Emmanuel.

Not even six months ago, your cousin Elizabeth,
who was barren, conceived a child, truly,
I tell you.
Since she [conceived] in [old] age, why not you,
in youth,
if it is the will of God, who can do anything?

Then, again she answered the angel in a
womanly manner:
whatsoever my lord commands me to do,
I will humbly obey.
Behold the handmaiden of the lord:
be it done unto me according to your word.

Mervele noght iosep on mary mylde
fforsake hyr not tho she be wit childe.

I iosep wonder how hit may be,
that mary wex gret when y and she
ever have leyvyd in chastite
iff she be wit chylde hit ys not by me.
Mervell not iosep.
Mervele noght iosep on mary mylde . . .

The holy gost wit mercifull distens,
In here hathe entryd witowte offens
God and man conceyved by his presens
An she virgin pure witowte violens.
Mervell not iosep.
Mervele noght iosep on mary mylde . . .

What the angell of god to me dothe say
I ioseph must and will umble obay
Ellys prively y wolde have stole away
But now will y serve here till that y day.
Mervell not iosep.
Mervele noght iosep on mary mylde . . .

Syng we to þis mery cumpane
Regina celi letare.

Holy maide blessyd þu be
godys sone is born of þe
þe fader of heven thus lyve we
regina celi letare.
Syng we . . .

Thou art emperesse of heven fre
now art thou moder in mageste
y knytte in the blessyd trinite
regina celi letare.
Syng we . . .

Lo this curteys kyng of degre
wole be thy sone with solempnite
mylde Mary this ys thy fee
regina celi letare
Syng we . . .

Ther fore knele we on oure kne
thy blysfyl berthe now worshyppe we
with this songe of melode
regina celi letare
Syng we . . .

Do not marvel, Joseph, about virtuous Mary;
do not forsake her, although she is with child.

I, Joseph, wonder how this can be
that Mary grows large, when she and I
have always lived in chastity.
If she is with child, it is not by me.
Do not marvel, Joseph.
Do not marvel, Joseph, about virtuous Mary . . .

The holy ghost, with merciful condescension
has entered into her body without wrongdoing,
God-and-man is conceived by his presence
and she remains a pure, undefiled virgin.
Do not marvel, Joseph.
Do not marvel, Joseph, about virtuous Mary . . .

What the angel of God says to me
I, Joseph, must and will humbly obey,
else I might have secretly stolen away;
but now I will serve her until I die.
Do not marvel, Joseph.
Do not marvel, Joseph, about virtuous Mary . . .

Let us sing to this merry company:
Rejoice, O queen of heaven!

Holy maiden, you are blessed:
you bore God's son.
We therefore profess him to be the father of heaven.
Rejoice, O queen of heaven!
Let us sing . . .

You are empress of precious heaven.
Now you are mother in majesty,
pregnant with the Holy Trinity.
Rejoice, O queen of heaven!
Let us sing . . .

Behold, this courteous king of high degree
Will be your son, [crowned] with solemnity.
Gracious Mary, this is your due.
Rejoice, O queen of heaven!
Let us sing . . .

Therefore we kneel down upon our knees.
We honor your blissful childbirth
with this melodious song:
Rejoice, O queen of heaven!
Let us sing . . .

Qui creavit celum lully lully lu
nascitur in stabulo by by by by by
rex qui regit seculum lully lully lu.

Joseph emit panniculum by by by by by
mater involvit puerum lully lully lu
et ponit in presepio by by by by by.

Inter animalia lully lully lu
jacent mundi gaudia by by by by by
dulcis super omnia lully lully lu.

Lactat mater domini by by by by by
osculatur parvulum lully lully lu
et adorat dominum by by by by by.

Roga mater filium lully lully lu
ut det nobis gaudium by by by by by
in perenni gloria lully lully lu.

In sempiterna secula by by by by by
in eternum et ultra lully lully lu
det nobis sua gaudia by by by by by.

He who created heaven, lully lully lu
is born in a stable, by by by by by,
the king who rules the ages, lully lully lu.

Joseph bought a little cloth;
the mother swaddled her baby boy
and placed him in a manger.

Among the animals,
the world's joys are laid,
sweet above all things.

The mother nurses the lord;
she kisses her little child
and thus adores her lord.

Mother, implore your son
that he may give us joy
in eternal glory.

Through everlasting ages,
through eternity and beyond,
may he grant us to rejoice in him.

A Virgin Unspotted

1. A virgin unspotted the prophets foretold,
Should bring forth a Savior which now we behold;
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,
Which Adam's transgression involved us in.
2. Through Bethlehem city in Jewry it was,
That Joseph and Mary together did pass;
And for to be taxed when thither they came,
Since Caesar Augustus commanded the same.
3. But Mary's full time being come, as we find,
She brought forth her first born to serve all mankind.
The inn being full for this heavenly guest,
No place there was found for to lay him to rest.
4. But Mary, blest Mary, so meek and so mild,
Soon wrapped in swaddlings this heavenly child.
Contented she laid him where oxen did feed,
The great God of nature approv'd of the deed.
5. Then presently after, the shepherds did spy
Vast numbers of angels to stand in the sky;
So merrily talking so sweet they did sing:
All glory and praise to our heavenly king.

As y lay up on a nyzt

*For sothe y sawe a semely syzt
i be held a berde so bryzt
a child she bare on honde.*

Her lokyng was so lovely,
here semblant was so swete
of alle my care and sorwe,
she may my balys bete
i be helde that swete wyzt,
and to my selfe y sayde
she hadde y do mankynde unryzt,
yf she were a mayde.

By here sate a seriant,
that saide in his sawe
he semyd by his semblant,
a man of the olde lawe
his here was hore al on his hede,
his ble be gan to glyde
she herde ful wel what y sayde,
and bad me faire a byde.

As y lay . . .

Thou wondryst he seide skilfully,
in thyng thou hast beholde
and so y dyde trywyly,
tyl talys were me tolde
and saide she was a lone,
maide and moder y core
and with oute wem of man,
a childe she hadde y bore.

They that y unworthy be,
she is mary myn owne wyf
god wote she hadde never childe by me
and 3yt y love here as my lyf.
but er ever y wyste
here womb be gan to rise,
y telle 3ow trywthe trywly
y note in whoche wyse.

As y lay . . .

Y trust un to here godenys
she wolde not mysdoo
that y wyst ful wel y wys
for ofte y have found it soo
that rather a maide sholde
with oute man conceyve
that mary misdo wolde
& so josep disceyve.

As y lay . . .

As I lay sleeping upon a night,

*truly, I saw a beautiful sight.
I beheld a maiden so bright:
she held a child in her arms.*

Her appearance was so lovely,
her expression was so sweet.
Despite all my care and sorrow
she could relieve me of my misery.
I beheld that sweet creature
and I said to myself:
she would have done mankind an injustice
if she hadn't borne a child.

A squire sat by her
and uttered these words.
He seemed by his appearance
to be a man of the old law.
His hair was greying on his head;
his complexion had begun to fade.
[He] heard full well what I had said
And bade me stay awhile.

As I lay sleeping . . .

You wonder, he said wisely,
about this thing you have seen.
And so I did, truly,
until it was explained to me.
He said she alone was
the chosen virgin and mother,
and without the stain of mankind
she had born a child.

Though I am not worthy of her,
she is Mary, my own wife.
God knows, she never had a child by me,
and yet I love her as my life.
But before I even knew it
her womb began to swell.
I tell you the truth, verily,
I do not know how it happened.

As I lay sleeping . . .

I trust in her goodness:
she would not do wrong.
This I know for certain, absolutely,
for I have often found it so.
It is more likely that a virgin should
conceive without a man,
than would Mary transgress,
and so deceive Joseph.

As I lay sleeping . . .

*Now may we syngen as it is
quod puer natus est nobis.*

This babe to us that now is bore
wundryful werkys he hath y wrowt
he wil not lese that was y lore
but boldly a3en it bowth
and thus it is ffor sothe y wys
he asketh nouth but that is hys.
Now may we syngen . . .

This chaffare lovyd he rith weel
the prys was hey & bowth ful dere
qwo wold suffre and for us feele
as did that prince was owten pere
and thus it is . . .
Now may we syngen . . .

Hys raunsum for us hath y paid
of resoun than we owyn to ben hys
be mercy asked and he be prayd
we may be rith kalange blys.
and thus it is . . .
Now may we syngen . . .

Almythy god in trynyte
thy mercy we pray with hool herte
thy mercy may all woo make fle
and daungerous dreed fro us do sterte.
and thus it is . . .
Now may we syngen . . .

*Now may we sing as it is
for unto us a child is born*

This baby, who has been born for us,
has done miraculous deeds;
he will not forsake those who are lost,
but will boldly redeem them.
And thus it is, certainly:
he asks for nothing but what is his.
Now may we sing . . .

He consented to this bargain;
the price was high and paid for very dearly.
Who [else] would suffer and die for us
as did that prince without peer?
And thus it is . . .
Now may we sing . . .

The ransom for us has been paid,
and for this reason, we are in his debt.
By asking mercy and by praying to him
we may claim heavenly bliss as our due.
And thus it is . . .
Now may we sing . . .

Almighty God in Trinity,
we pray for your mercy wholeheartedly.
Your mercy will dispel all affliction
and keep from us the most perilous danger.
And thus it is . . .
Now may we sing . . .

Lullay my child: This ender nithgt

*Lullay my child and wepe no more
slepe and be now styll
kyng of blis thi fader he es
and thus it es his wyll.*

This ender nithgt I sauy ha sithgt
ha may ha credill kepe
hand ever schuy sang
hande sayde in mang
lullay my child ande slepe.

I may nocht slepe I may bot wepe
i ham so wobegony.
slepe I wolde
but me hes colde
hande clothse hauf I nony.

The chylde was swet
hand sor he wepe
hande ever me thoht he sayde
moder dere
way doy I here
in crache wy ham I layde

Adam gilt
that man has spilde
that syn rues me fole sore
man for the
here sal I be
xxx yere ande mor.

Dolles to dreye
and I sale dye,
and e hyng I sale on the rode
wondys to wete
my bals to bethe
and e gif my fleches to blode.

A spere so charpe
sale thirll my hert
for the dede that man has done
fadere ofe blys,
wartu thu has
forsakin me thi sone.

Lullay my child: The other night

*Lullay my child and weep no more,
sleep and be still now.
Your father is the king of heavenly bliss
and thus it is all as he wishes it to be.*

The other night, I saw a sight,
a maiden watched by a cradle,
and ever she sang
and all the while said:
lullay my child and sleep.

I cannot sleep, I can only weep:
I am so woebegone.
I would sleep,
but I am cold,
and I have no clothing.

The child was sweet,
but he wept sorely,
and ever I thought he said:
Mother dear,
what am I doing here?
Why am I lying in a manger?

Adam's transgression
that condemned humankind to perdition,
that sin grieves me sorely.
Mankind, for you
will I stay here
for thirty years and more.

I will endure suffering,
and I will die,
and I will be hung on the cross.
To wash away sin
and to redeem mankind
I will give my body to be bloodied.

A spear so sharp
will pierce my heart
because of the sins of man.
Father of heavenly bliss,
why have you
forsaken me, your son?

Star in the East

1. Hail the blest morn, see the great Mediator
Down from the regions of glory descend!
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo, for his guard the bright angels attend.

Chorus:

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning!
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
Star in the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer was laid.

2. Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining:
Low lies his bed, with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Wise men and shepherds before him do fall.
3. Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
Odours of Eden, and offerings divine,
Gems from the mountain, and pearls from the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?

Veni redemptor gentium

This worle wondreth of all thyng
howe a maide conceyved a kyng
to geve us al ther of shewyng.
veni redemptor gentium.

Whan gabriel come with his gretynge
to mary moder that swete thyng
he graunted and saide with grete lykynge.
veni redemptor gentium.

Ambrose saide in his writyng
cyst sholde be in a maide dwellyng
to make sothe alle that syngyng,
veni redemptor gentium.

Cryst y crowned at oure begynnyng
Be with us at oure endyng
Us to that ioye for to bryng.
Veni redemptor gentium.

Come, redeemer of the peoples

The entyre world wonders how, of all things,
a virgin conceived a king
to bestow on all of us that divine manifestation.
Come, redeemer of the peoples.

When Gabriel came with his greeting
to Mary, mother, that sweet thing,
he acknowledged her and called, with great delight:
Come, redeemer of the peoples.

Ambrose proclaimed in his hymn
that Christ should be made incarnate through
a virgin,
to make true every word in that hymn
Come, redeemer of the peoples.

Christ, who is crowned at our beginning,
be with us at our ending
to bring us to heavenly bliss.
Come, redeemer of the peoples.

The Cherry Tree Carol

1. When Joseph was a young man,
A young man was he,
He courted Virgin Mary,
The Queen of Galilee.
2. As Joseph and Mary
Were walking one day,
Here is apples and cherries
Enough to behold.
3. Then Mary spoke to Joseph
So meek and so mild:
Joseph, gather me some cherries,
For I am with child.
4. Then Joseph flew in angry,
In angry he flew:
Let the father of the baby
Gather cherries for you.
5. Lord Jesus spoke a few words
All down unto them:
Bow low down, low down, cherry
tree,
Let the mother have some.
6. The cherry tree bowed low down,
Low down to the ground,
And Mary gathered cherries
While Joseph stood around.
7. Then Joseph took Mary
All on his right knee.
He cried: O Lord, have mercy
For what have I done.

Salve mater misericordie
mundi salus et datrix venie

Porta vite celestis curie
stella maris decus ecclesie.

Que portasti regem iusticie
miro modo non nostra serie

Miserere huius familie
et a malis salva nos hodie.

Maria ave plena graciae.

Hail mary ful of grace
Modyr in virgynytee.

The holy gost is to the sent
ffro the fadyr omnipotent
now is god wyth in the went
[whan] the aungel seyde ave.
Hail mary . . .

Qwan the aungel ave began
fflesch & blood to gedyr ran
marye bar bothe god and man
thorw vertu & pour dyngnyte.
Hail mary . . .

So seyth the gospel of seynt ion
gode & man is mad but on
in flesch & blode body and bon
o[n] god in personys thre.
Hail mary . . .

And the prophete Jeremye
told in hys prophecye
that the sone of Marye
schuld deye for us on rode tre.
Hail mary . . .

Meche ioye to us was graunth
and in erthe pees [y] plaunth
qwan that born was this faunth
in the lond of galyle.
Hail mary . . .

Hail mother of mercy
the world's welfare and giver of grace,

gate of life in heaven's court,
star of the sea and jewel of the church,

you who bore the king of justice
by miraculous means, not of our [human] seed:

have mercy on your servants
and save us from evil today.

Hail Mary, full of grace!

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
mother in virginity.

The holy ghost has been sent to you
by the omnipotent father;
now did God go within you
when the angel said "Ave."
Hail Mary . . .

When the angel began his greeting,
flesh and blood ran together;
Mary bore both God and man
through virtue and through dignity.
Hail Mary . . .

So says the gospel of Saint John,
God and man are made one,
in flesh and blood, body and bone:
one God in persons three.
Hail Mary . . .

And the prophet Jeremy
told us in his prophecy
that the son of Mary
would die for us on the cross.
Hail Mary . . .

Much joy was granted to us
and peace on earth was established
when this infant was born
in the land of Galilee.
Hail Mary . . .

Bethlehem

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 seiz'd their troubled mind,
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

Middle English translations by Marsha Genensky. Latin translations by Susan Hellauer

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