

Singing Our Faith
Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord – January 7, 2018

As with Gladness Men of Old



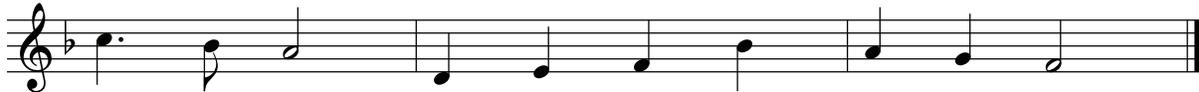
1. As with glad - ness men of old Did the guid - ing
2. As with joy - ful steps they sped To that low - ly
3. As they of - fered gifts most rare At that man - ger
4. Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day Keep us in the
5. In the heav'n - ly cit - y bright None shall need cre -



star be - hold; As with joy they hailed its light,
man - ger - bed, There to bend the knee be - fore
crude and bare; So may we this ho - ly day,
nar - row way; And when earth - ly things are past,
at - ed light; You, its light, its joy, its crown,



Lead - ing on - ward, beam - ing bright; So, most gra - cious
Him, whom heav'n and earth a - dore; So may we with
Drawn to you with - out de - lay, All our cost - liest
Bring our ran - somed souls at last Where they need no
You, its sun which goes not down; There for - ev - er



Lord, may we Ev - er - more your splen - dor see.
hur - ried pace Run to seek your throne of grace.
treas - ures bring, Christ, to you, our heav'n - ly King.
star to guide, Where no clouds your glo - ry hide.
may we sing Al - le - lu - ias to our King.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.
Tune: DIX, 77 77 77; arr. from Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872, by William H. Monk, 1823–1889

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Sunday's first reading from Isaiah was written when the exiled Jews were returning from Babylon to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Isaiah's prophecy about the city is full of hope – *"...but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory. Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance."* Ultimately, through Jesus, we have the **New** Jerusalem, the Kingdom of Heaven. On this feast when we celebrate the guiding Light of Christ, the final stanza of the closing hymn "As With Gladness Men of Old" perfectly sums up the New Jerusalem opened by Jesus...

**In the heavenly city bright
None shall need created light;
You, its light, its joy, its crown,
You, its sun which goes not down.**

The opening three stanzas of this hymn put the historic visit of the Magi into a very applicable perspective for us. The first half of each stanza recalls an action of the Magi, and the second half of each stanza is how we should echo their action. *"So most gracious Lord, may we evermore your splendor see. So may we with hurried pace run to seek your throne of grace. All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly king."* These stanzas make the actions of the Magi a model for our discipleship. Do we recognize God's beauty

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in all things? Do we seek the Throne of Grace in the sacraments? Do we give back to God from the gifts he has given us? The stanza that follows is a prayer asking Jesus to keep us on track with these elements of discipleship.

I began reflecting on the last stanza, which puts the Epiphany theme of light into a resurrection perspective. The beauty of the Catholic Church's liturgy is that, even in this Christmas season, we constantly reflect on the death and resurrection of Christ through the Sacrifice of the Mass. If you listen to the prayers of the Mass, they almost always mention something about staying on the path to heaven, no matter if it's Christmas, Lent, or Ordinary Time. Keeping our discipleship in check and staying on the road to Jesus are tasks that remain on our checklist throughout the liturgical year! The historic figures of the Christmas story can often be reduced to statues in our nativity scenes, pictures in children's books, or beautiful paintings. Let us bring these characters to life by having our own epiphany this Sunday, realizing the model which the Magi give us about how to worship, adore, and love the Lord with our whole being and all we have.

Blessings on your Christmas Season!

Stephen Eros

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