

6 So it was, that while they were

there, the days were completed for

her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her

firstborn Son, and wrapped Him

in swaddling cloths, and laid

Him in a manger, because there

was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same
country shepherds living out in
the fields, keeping watch over their
flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of the
Lord stood before them, and the
glory of the Lord shone around
them, and they were greatly

afraid.

10 Then the angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid, for behold, I

bring you good tidings of great

joy which will be to all people

11 For there is born to you this

day in the city of David a

Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be the sign to

you: You will find a Babe

wrapped in swaddling cloths,

lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with

the angel a multitude of the

heavenly host praising God and

saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace, goodwill

toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels

had gone away from them into

heaven, that the shepherds said to

one another, "Let us now go to

Bethlehem and see this thing that

has come to pass, which the Lord

has made known to us."

16 And they came with haste and

found Mary and Joseph, and the

Babe lying in a manger.

17 Now when they had seen Him,

they made widely known the

saying which was told them

concerning this Child.

18 And all those who heard it
marveled at those things which
were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things
and pondered them in her heart.

20 Then the shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God for

all the things that they had

heard and seen, as it was told

them.

39 Now Mary arose in those days

and went into the hill country

with haste, to a city of Judah,

40 and entered the house of

Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

41 And it happened, when

Elizabeth heard the greeting of

Mary, that the babe leaped in her

womb; and Elizabeth was filled

with the Holy Spirit.

42 Then she spoke out with a

loud voice and said, "Blessed are

you among women, and blessed is

the fruit of your womb!

43 But why is this granted to

me, that the mother of my Lord

should come to me?

44 For indeed, as soon as the

voice of your greeting sounded in

my ears, the babe leaped in my

womb for joy.

45 Blessed is she who believed, for

there will be a fulfillment of those

things which were told her from

the Lord."

This advent moon shines cold
and clear,

These Advent nights are long;

Our lamps have burned year
after year,

And still their flame is strong.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

we cry,

Heart-sick with hope deferred:

"No speaking signs are in the sky,"

Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,

The servants watch within;

The watch is long betimes and

late,

The prize is slow to win.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

but still

His answer sounds the same:

"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,

Nor pale our lamps of flame."

One to another hear them speak,

The patient virgins wise:

"Surely He is not far to seek," -

"All night we watch and rise."

"The days are evil looking back,

The coming days are dim;

Yet count we not His promise

slack,

But watch and wait for Him."

One with another, soul with soul,

They kindle fire from fire:

"Friends watch us who have
touched the goal."

"They urge us, come up higher."

"With them shall rest our wayworn
feet,

With them is built our home,

With Christ." "They sweet, but He
most sweet,

Sweeter than honeycomb."

There are no more parting, no

more pain,

The distant ones brought near,

The lost so long are found again,

Long lost but longer dear:

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not

heard,

Nor heart conceived that rest,

With them our good things long

deferred,

With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,

We laugh, for day shall rise,

We sing a slow contented song

And knock at Paradise.

Weeping we hold Him fast Who

wept

For us, - we hold Him fast;

And will not let Him go except

He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast

to-night;

We will not let Him go

Till daybreak smite our wearied

sight,

And summer smite the snow:

Then figs shall bud, and dove

with dove

Shall coo the livelong day;

Then He shall say, "Arise, My love,

My fair one, come away."

Night walks with a heavy step

round yard and hearth,

As the sun departs from earth,

shadows are brooding.

There in our dark house, walking

with lit candles,

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Night walks grand, yet silent,

now hear its gentle wings,

In every room so hushed,

whispering like wings.

Look, at our threshold stands,

white-clad with light in her hair,

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Darkness shall take flight soon,

from earth's valleys.

So she speaks wonderful words to

us:

A new day will rise again from

the rosy sky

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

'Twas the night before Christmas,

when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not

even a mouse;

The stockings were hung by the

chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon

would be there;

The children were nestled all snug

in their beds;

While visions of sugar-plums

danced in their heads;

And mamma in her 'kerchief,

and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains for a

long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose
such a clatter,

I sprang from my bed to see
what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like
a flash,

Tore open the shutters and threw
up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the

new-fallen snow,

Gave a lustre of midday to objects

below,

When what to my wondering eyes

did appear,

But a miniature sleigh and eight

tiny rein-deer,

With a little old driver so lively

and quick,

I knew in a moment he must be

St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his

courses they came,

And he whistled, and shouted,

and called them by name:

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now

Prancer and Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on,

Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch! to the

top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away!

dash away all!"

As leaves that before the wild

hurricane fly,

When they meet with an obstacle,

mount to the sky;

So up to the housetop the coursers

they flew

With the sleigh full of toys, and

St. Nicholas too-

And then, in a twinkling, I

heard on the roof

The prancing and pawing of

each little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was

turning around,

Down the chimney St. Nicholas

came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from

his head to his foot,

And his clothes were all tarnished

with ashes and soot;

A bundle of toys he had flung

on his back,

And he looked like a pedler just

opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his

dimples, how merry!

His cheeks were like roses, his nose

like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn

up like a bow,

And the beard on his chin was

as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held tight

in his teeth,

And the smoke, it encircled his

head like a wreath;

He had a broad face and a little

round belly

That shook when he laughed, like

a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a

right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I saw

him, in spite of myself;

A wink of his eye and a twist

of his head

Soon gave me to know I had

nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went

straight to his work,

And filled all the stockings; then

turned with a jerk,

And laying his finger aside of

his nose,

And giving a nod, up the

chimney he rose;

He sprang to his sleigh, to his

team gave a whistle,

And away they all flew like the

down of a thistle.

But I heard him exclaim, ere he

drove out of sight—

“Happy Christmas to all, and to

all a good night!”