

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 Baby 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

waysore feet,

With them is built our

home,

With Christ." "They sweet,

but He most sweet,

Sweeter than honeycomb."

There 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!

It was 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

courseurs 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

couriers 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

furnished 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!”