

~~ GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE ~~

Gathering Music: *Huron Carol* [sung by Five Fifths at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DtOqcFBQqk>]

The "Huron Carol" (or "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime") is a Christmas hymn, written in 1643 by Jean de Brébeuf, a Christian missionary at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons in Canada. Brébeuf wrote the lyrics in the native language of the Huron/Wendat people; the song's original Huron title is "Jesous Ahatonhia" ("Jesus, he is born"). The song's melody is a traditional French folk song, "Une Jeune Pucelle" ("A Young Maid"). The English lyrics were written in 1926 by Jesse Edgar Middleton.

'Twas in the moon of wintertime When all the birds had fled
That mighty Gitchi Manitou Sent angel choirs instead
Before their light the stars grew dim And wandering hunters heard the hymn
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born In excelsis gloria

Within a lodge of broken bark The tender Babe was found
A ragged robe of rabbit skin Enwrapp'd His beauty round
And as the hunter braves drew nigh The angel song rang loud and high
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born In excelsis gloria

The earliest moon of wintertime Is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory On the helpless infant there
The chiefs from far before him knelt With gifts of fur and beaver pelt
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born In excelsis gloria

O children of the forest free O sons of Manitou
The Holy Child of earth and heaven Is born today for you
Come kneel before the radiant Boy Who brings you beauty, peace and joy
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born In excelsis gloria

Call to Prayer: *Hush* [Lucinda Hynett]

Sssh. Can you hear it?
An expectant silence, a hushed anticipation, as if the very galaxy is holding its breath.
There are some truths even the stars know, like darkness, like loneliness
and how the night can be a living thing.
And how once, long ago, the night waited in wonder
along with the darkness and the loneliness, for the sound of a baby's cry,
for the miraculous to come down to the earth mundane.



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. Matt 1:10-11

The wise ones bring gifts: gold, a costly stone that speaks of the preciousness of the Child; frankincense, a blessed aromatic that signifies the sacredness of the Child; myrrh, a curative ointment that points to the healing gifts of the Child. Preciousness, sacredness, healing – this is what the magi are looking for and come to adore. . . We carry within us the precious gold of life, the sacred fragrance of God, the healing salve of love. Let us live it together.

~ John Philip Newell

Gift One: The Precious Gold of Life



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. . . From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
Jn 1:1-4, 16

The flesh that the Word of God became as a particular human being is part of the tree of evolving life on earth, which in turn is part of the vast body of the cosmos.
~ Elizabeth Johnson

Gift Two: The Sacred Fragrance of God – Frankincense [Resin from the Boswellia tree]

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him.
Col 1:15-16

God creates the entire universe fully and totally in the present now ... There where time never penetrates, where no image shines in us, in the innermost and deepest aspect of the soul, God creates the whole cosmos in the innermost depths of every soul now.
~ Meister Eckhart



Gift Three: The Healing Salve of Love – Myrrh



Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace.
Lk 2:14

this is the birth day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay great happening illimitably earth
~ e.e. cummings

We good women, women of Mercy, are invited to be midwives of the birth of our God in our community living, in our ministry, in our advocacy for women and children, in our care for Earth.

Closing Reflection by Pat Bergen, csj

May the Star of inclusive, poured out, communing love, direct every decision you make on your journey.
May your dreams lead you to profound reverence as you bow before the Divine
born in the stable of every heart and in the stable of the whole universe.
May Mary guide you in birthing the Holy One in your life and in birthing Love in others.
May Joseph engage you in deeper questioning and listening and give you courage to risk the next step.
May your life become a luminous presence,
leading others to the place in their heart and in the world
where Christ is always being born anew.