

Christ Born

December 22, 2012

The appeal of the divine baby in the arms of his Virgin Mother still makes of Christmas the most popular of Christian Feasts, but as the world turns away from God, so the heart and soul of the Nativity Scene fade out, and "Christmassy" feelings become more and more fake. Truly Christendom is burnt out. It is time to turn back with the liturgy of Mother Church to the ages before Christ when wise men rejoiced intensely in the expectation of his coming. For them, it alone made sense of the unhappiness of mankind being ravaged by the consequences of original sin. It was their great hope, and it could not be shaken. The Christ would come, and with him the gates of Heaven would be open once more to souls of good will. Here are the Antiphons of the fourth Sunday of Advent, composed from texts of the Old Testament.

"Blow the trumpet in Sion, because the day of the Lord is near: behold, he will come to save us, allelujah, allelujah." If men do not want to be saved, then they can hardly understand what they were born for, and they must die in a greater or lesser degree of despair. But if we want to be happy for all eternity, and if we know that Jesus Christ alone makes that possible, then how must we rejoice that he came!

"Behold, the desired of all nations will come, and the house of the Lord will be filled with glory, allelujah." As original sin is universal, so the Magi came from strange and distant lands to adore their Saviour in Bethlehem, and they could have come from all nations of the world in desire of him. Since their time, Christians have indeed come from all nations to find their Saviour in his Catholic Church, and they have filled it with the glory of beautiful ceremonies, buildings, vestments, art and music, ever since.

"The crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways smooth:

come, O Lord, and do not delay." Four thousand years on from the Fall of Adam and Eve, the world had become quite crooked. Two thousand years ago the most astonishing transformation of mankind began with Our Lord being born. For centuries we have taken for granted that smooth ways of civilization will remain smooth, but with men's spurning of Christ those ways are turning rougher than ever – see any newspaper of today. Come, O Lord, come back, and do not delay, because otherwise we shall all be devouring one another like wild beasts.

"The Lord will come, go to meet him, saying: "Great is his beginning, and of his kingdom there will be no end: God, Mighty, Lord of all, Prince of Peace, allelujah, allelujah." With such words maybe the Magi greeted the Christ Child when after long travels they found him. Converts of today, after long travails in the desert of godlessness, may still find similar words to remind us of how the Child in the crib should be greeted. Without him the world cannot have peace, and it stands on the brink of another terrible war. Divine Child, come, do not delay, or we perish.

"Thy Almighty Word, O Lord, will leap from thy royal throne, allelujah." Christmas is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity descending all the way from Heaven, being clothed in a feeble human nature and being born of a human Mother to buy us back from slavery to the Devil and re-open the gates of Heaven for souls of good will, ready to believe. Divine Child, I believe. Help thou my unbelief, and help with special graces on the Feast of your birth millions and millions of unbelieving souls.

Kyrie eleison.