

The Nativity of Christ

Behold, the father is his daughter's son,
The bird that built the nest is hatched therein,
The old of years an hour hath not outrun,
Eternal life to live doth now begin,
The Word is dumb, the mirth of heaven doth weep,
Might feeble is and force doth faintly creep.

O dying souls, behold your living spring;
O dazzled eyes, behold your sun of grace;
Dull ears, attend what word this Word doth bring;
Up, heavy hearts, with joy your joy embrace.
From death, from dark, from deafness, from despairs,
This life, this light, this Word, this joy repairs.

Gift better than Himself God does not know;
Gift better than his God no man can see.
This gift doth here the giver given bestow;
Gift to this gift let each receiver be.
God is my gift, himself he freely gave me;
God's gift am I, and none but God shall have me.

Man altered was by sin from man to beast;
Beast's food is hay, hay is all mortal flesh.
Now God is flesh and lies in manger pressed
As hay, the brutest sinner to refresh.
O happy field wherein this fodder grew,
Whose taste doth us from beasts to men renew.

Robert Southwell (1561–1595)

to LeAnn, for her joy

The Nativity of Christ*

SATB *divisi* with piano or full orchestra**

Robert Southwell (1561–1595)

J.A.C. Redford

* *The Nativity of Christ* is excerpted from an extended work entitled *Welcome All Wonders: A Christmas Celebration*.

The complete work may be secured from the composer (www.jacredford.com).

** Full Score and set of parts are available from the publisher (30/2341R):
2 Fls., Ob.-Eng. Hn., 2 Cls., 2 Bsns., 2 Hns., 2 Tpts., 2 Bass Tbns., Tuba (opt.),
Perc., Harp, Strings

Duration: 3:18

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3

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

Hn.

hold the fa - ther is his

hold the fa - ther is his

mp

4

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

daugh - ter's son, _____ The

daugh - ter's son, _____ The

mp

6

5

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

Hn

8 bird that built the nest is

bird that built the nest is

p

6

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

hatched there - in, The

hatched there - in, The

mp

7

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

Hn.

old of years _____ an hour hath
old of years _____ an hour hath

p

8

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

not out - run, _____ E -
not out - run, _____ E -

p

9

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

Hn

ter - nal life _____ to live doth

ter - nal life _____ to live doth

10

na
na na na na na na na na na na na na na na

now be - gin,

now be - gin,

na na

11

na na

na na na na na na na na na na na na

f

The

8

Word

is

dumb,

the

Word

is

dumb, _____

the

12

Word

is

dumb,

the

Word

is

dumb, _____

the

15/2434R-9

12

Word

is

dumb,

the

Word

is

dumb, _____

the

15/2434R-9

10

13

Musical score for measures 10-13. The score consists of four staves. The top two staves are treble clef, the bottom two are bass clef. Measure 10 starts with a rest. Measure 11 starts with a rest. Measure 12 begins with a bass line consisting of eighth notes. The lyrics "mirth of heav'n doth weep," are written below the bass line. Measure 13 continues the bass line with eighth notes.

14

Musical score for measure 14. The score consists of four staves. The top two staves are treble clef, the bottom two are bass clef. The lyrics "Might fee - ble is, and" are written below the treble clef staves. The bass line consists of eighth notes. Measure 14 concludes with a bass line consisting of eighth notes.