

ITALIAN ADVENT CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2002 – 8:00 PM
TOWN HALL

Catherine Haight, soprano
Kathryn Weld, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Wall, tenor
ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653-1713)
Concerto Grosso in G minor (*Fatto per la notte di Natale*), Op. 6 No. 8

Vivace – Grave
Allegro
Adagio – Allegro – Adagio
Vivace
Allegro
Pastorale: Largo

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)
Gloria, RV 589

Gloria in excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax
Laudamus te
Gratias agimus tibi
Propter magnam gloriam
Domine Deus
Domine Fili unigenite
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei
Qui tollis
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris
Quoniam tu solus sanctus
Cum sancto spiritu

Catherine Haight, soprano
Kathryn Weld, mezzo-soprano

– Intermission –

OTTORINO RESPIGHI (1879-1936)
Lauda per la Natività del Signore, P. 166

Catherine Haight, soprano
Kathryn Weld, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Wall, tenor

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.

ARCANGELO CORELLI

Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 6 No. 8

Corelli was born February 17, 1653 in Fusignano, Italy, and died January 8, 1713 in Rome. His twelve concerti grossi were likely composed during the last two decades of his life and first performed at the composer's weekly concerts in Rome. Corelli began revising and preparing them for publication in 1708; the preface is dated December 3, 1712. They were published posthumously, in 1714. Each concerto is scored for a solo concertino of two violins and cello, string orchestra and continuo.

Arcangelo Corelli was known in his day as an extraordinary violinist, but as the son of a wealthy landowner he was able to limit his compositional output to those types of works that interested him. Corelli's comparatively small body of work is largely restricted to three genres: the solo sonata, the trio sonata and the concerto grosso. He was the first composer to achieve widespread fame purely for instrumental music, never composing an opera or (as far as we can tell) any vocal music whatsoever.

Corelli's Op. 6 set of twelve concerti grossi are often considered pinnacles of the Italian concerto grosso style, synthesizing and refining what had come before him and setting the stage for those who would follow. (Handel used them as a model for his own famous Op. 6 set of concerti.) Although Corelli assembled these works at the end of his life for publication, he had composed many of them much earlier, polishing and refining them through repeated performances.

Among the dozen works in his Op. 6, the first eight are in the *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata) style, while the last four follow the *sonata da camera* (chamber sonata) format. By far the most famous is No. 8, dubbed the "Christmas Concerto" because of its final movement, marked *Pastorale*. This term is derived from the Italian word *pastori*, referring to the shepherds who gathered at the manger in Bethlehem. By Corelli's time it had become an Italian tradition for rural shepherds to journey into a nearby town on Christmas Eve and play their pipes in front of nativity scenes. The music most often associated with this tradition was a gentle, lilting *siciliano* in 12/8 meter. Corelli may have been the first composer to use this type of tune in a concert work in order to musically depict the nativity scene, but he would certainly not be the last: both Handel (the "Pastoral Symphony" in *Messiah*) and Bach (the opening sinfonia of the second cantata in the *Christmas Oratorio*) adopted the technique.

— Jeff Eldridge

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Gloria, RV 589

Vivaldi was born March 4, 1678 in Venice and died July 28, 1741 in Vienna. In addition to vocal soloists and chorus, his Gloria is scored for oboe, trumpet, strings and continuo.

Antonio Vivaldi's father was a professional violinist in the orchestra of the prestigious Basilica di San Marco in Venice, and Antonio proved to be a highly talented violinist

himself. Indeed, his instrumental music marks one of the peaks of Italian Baroque violin composition. According to his own account, within a year of his ordination to the priesthood in 1703, Antonio Vivaldi no longer wished to celebrate mass, possibly due to physical ailments ("tightness of the chest"). It may be, however, that Vivaldi, called the "Red Priest" because of his hair color, was feigning illness—he is said to have left the altar at times in order to write down a musical idea that had suddenly come to him. In the same year as his ordination, Vivaldi was appointed *maestro di violino* at the Ospedale della Pietà, one of the Venetian girls' "orphanages." (This "hospital" was in fact a home for the illegitimate daughters of noblemen and their numerous mistresses, which is reputed to have housed as many as 6,000 girls; it was generously endowed by the girls' "anonymous" fathers; the young ladies were well cared-for; and musical training was a central part of the curriculum. Many of Vivaldi's hundreds of concerti were exercises that he would play with his talented students.) He was associated with the Pietà, usually as music director, until 1740, teaching violin, composing oratorios and concertos for weekly concerts, and establishing a shining reputation both at home and abroad. During the years in which he composed operas (1713-1739), the Venetian theaters staged more works of Vivaldi's than of any other composer, and he also traveled to Rome, Mantua, and elsewhere to supervise his operas' performances. About 1740 he took a position at the court of Emperor Charles VI in Vienna, where he died.

Vivaldi was a composer who was both unbelievably speedy (he is said to have completed the opera *Tito Manlio* in five days, and he prided himself on being able to write a concerto faster than a copyist could write it out) and incredibly prolific (approximately 500 concertos exist, as well as 23 sinfonias, 75 solo or trio sonatas, 49 operas, about 40 cantatas, some 50 motets, and many oratorios). Although he is known today for only a few instrumental works (chiefly the cycle of violin concerti known as the Four Seasons), Vivaldi's influence is clearly evident in the forms of later Baroque music, notably in the original compositions of Bach and his German contemporaries, and also in Bach's transcriptions for harpsichord and organ of Vivaldi's concerti. Indeed, Vivaldi was one of the most significant figures in the transition from late Baroque to early Classical style because of the economy of his writing for string orchestra, his theatrical conception of the role of the instrumental soloist; the conciseness of his themes, the grace and clarity of his forms, the driving energy of his rhythms, the continuity of the flow of his musical ideas, and his emphasis on the sonic contrasts and tensions between soloists and larger ensembles.

The *Gloria*, a joyful hymn of praise and worship, is part of the Roman Catholic Mass. Its opening phrases have their origins in the song, recorded in St. Luke's account of Christ's birth, that the angels sang to the shepherds. Between 1713 and 1719, Vivaldi kept the Ospedale della Pietà well supplied with sacred music, and this setting of the *Gloria*, one of two which he composed in D major, is probably

among the earliest of these works. It is divided into twelve relatively brief movements contrasting in mood, musical texture, and instrumental and vocal color, yet still coherent in overall musical structure.

Gloria in excelsis Deo

The first movement of Vivaldi's best-known sacred work opens with octave leaps and repeated patterns of notes that establish the triumphant key of D major and set a mood of pomp, grandeur, and anticipation. Trumpet and oboe add regal color to the orchestral palette, and the declamatory entries of the chorus maintain rhythmic momentum.

Et in terra pax hominibus

The tonality changes to B minor in this meditative movement, which features a gently throbbing string accompaniment to the chorus coupled with poignant chromaticism.

Laudamus te

In this joyful G-major duet, a recurring instrumental refrain separates the vocal sections. At first the voices imitate each other and then they join to sing together in thirds.

Gratias agimus tibi

In this six-measure chordal section in E minor, the chorus repeats its solemn thanks to God.

Propter magnam gloriam

God's great glory is praised fugally by the chorus in the key of E minor established by the previous movement.

Domine Deus

A long, lilting soprano solo in C major and 12/8 time, interwoven with an equally lovely instrumental countermelody, played by oboe or violin, together depict God not only as the Almighty King of Heaven but also as a tender and loving Father.

Domine Fili unigenite

This choral movement, in triple meter and F major, features dotted rhythms and the textural contrast of pairs of vocal parts alternating with four-part harmony.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei

In this D-minor movement, the alto soloist's descending lines, accompanied by continuo, stand in contrast with the chordal petitions of the choir and orchestra for mercy.

Qui tollis peccata mundi

In this binary A-minor chorus, Vivaldi sets a somber mood through the use of chromaticism and of ever-shorter phrases in triple meter that build rhythmic urgency as the chorus implores the one who takes away the sins of the world to hear its prayer.

Qui sedes ad dexteram

Despite its lively 3/8 meter, this B-minor movement maintains the same grave mood as the preceding two penitential movements as strings and continuo accompany the alto soloist.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus

The D-major thematic material of the first movement,

including its opening oscillating octaves, returns in this section to balance the formal structure of the entire work.

Cum Sancto Spiritu

With this well-crafted D-major double fugue (a fugue based on two independent themes), the chorus concludes the work on a suitably celebratory note. The music of this movement, which appears with slight modifications in Vivaldi's other *Gloria* (RV 588), is an adaptation of a fugue from a 1708 *Gloria* written by the obscure Italian opera composer Giovanni Maria Ruggieri, a fugue might have remained unknown had Vivaldi not borrowed it.

OTTORINO RESPIGHI

Lauda per la Natività del Signore, P. 166

Respighi was born July 9, 1879, in Bologna, Italy, and died April 18, 1936, in Rome. His cantata Lauda per la Natività del Signore, a setting of a text by the 13th century Franciscan friar Jacopone da Todi, was composed in 1930; it was first performed on November 22 of that year in Siena, under the direction of the composer. In addition to three vocal soloists and chorus, the work is scored for 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo), oboe, English horn, 2 bassoons, triangle, and piano (four hands).

Ottorino Respighi's music has been described as "new old music": he brought to the forms, techniques, and melodic lines of early Italian music his special gift for evoking poetic images, and his ability to, in his words, "reproduce by means of tone an impression of nature." He was uniquely successful in clothing the best of the Italian musical past in the luminous harmonies and orchestral colors of the present. He desired above all to compose music that would speak to his compatriots about all aspects of their beloved country in a musical language that was beautiful and easy for ordinary people to accept and enjoy. He is probably best known for his highly descriptive symphonic poems, *The Fountains of Rome*, *The Pines of Rome* and *Roman Festivals*, which are wonderful examples of his style, embody his musical ideals, and bring the spirit and history of the city of Rome powerfully and vividly to life.

Respighi was a reserved and musically talented youth who began studying the violin at the age of eight and composition at thirteen. By the age of twenty, he was also an excellent viola player and pianist. In 1900 Respighi composed his first major work, the *Symphonic Variations*, written for his final examinations at his father's Liceo Musicale in Bologna. At this time, he was playing in the orchestra of the Teatro Comunale, Bologna, and his ability as both a violinist and a violist was so outstanding that he was offered an engagement with the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg as a violist; he played later at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow as well. Respighi soon became fluent in Russian, as he did later in many other languages, and spent some five months studying composition and orchestration with the famous Russian composer, Rimsky-Korsakov, who rapidly recognized the young Italian's gifts and taught him mostly by offering him suggestions as needed. The young composer's musical education was also

enhanced by attending Max Bruch's lectures in Berlin in 1908.

Respighi received his diploma in composition in 1901, and proceeded to build his reputation as a composer with a glittering variety of works, including his first opera (*Re Enzo*), songs, quintets, a piano concerto, sonatas, and the Suite in G Major for Strings and Organ, a musical tribute to Bach, whom Respighi held in highest esteem. A superb arranger, he made brilliant orchestral transcriptions of works by Bach, Monteverdi, Tartini, Vitali, Vivaldi, and Rossini (his arrangement of pieces by Rossini, *La Boutique Fantasque*, produced by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in London in 1919, became one of his most popular works), and he also edited many early chamber works for modern publication and performance. His operas brought him recognition that led in 1913 to an appointment as Professor of Composition at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome, where he was the director from 1924 until 1926.

It was his songs that first attracted to Respighi the 18-year-old Elsa Oliveri-Sangiaco, a gifted singer who was 15 years younger than Respighi and who herself became a composer of operas, choral and symphonic works, and songs. She became his pupil, and their relationship developed into a love affair that led in 1919 to marriage. Elsa thereafter gave up her own musical career and devoted herself completely to her husband's. Elsa told an interviewer:

"I have lived amongst music all my life. That is why Respighi always respected my judgment. I was always objective and sometimes I needed to tell him, 'You know, I think there are eight bars too much here,' and a few days later he would come back and say, 'You were right, Elsa.' We worked together this way all the time. Our marriage was a perfect union; we mutually respected our totally different personalities. We never tried to interfere with each other's tastes or wishes. This was the way we were made and we were destined to live together in total happiness."

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, a wide variety of brilliant works flowed from Respighi's pen: the *Adagio with Variations for Cello and Orchestra*; the *Trittico botticelliano*; and the masterful operas, *La Fiamma*, *La campana sommersa*, and *La bella dormiente nel bosco* (*Sleeping Beauty*). His deep love of, and identification with, ancient Italian music brought to birth such works as the three delightful sets of *Ancient Airs and Dances*, transcribed from lute music, the *Concerto in the Antique Style*, and *Gli uccelli* (*The Birds*). "The Italian genius," he wrote, "is for melody and clarity. Today there is a noticeable return to the less sophisticated music of the past—in harmony to the church modes and in form to the suites of dances." Respighi incorporated medieval melodies and modes into such compositions as his *Concerto gregoriano*, *Vetrata di chiesa* (*Church Windows*), and his *Concerto in the Mixolydian Mode* for piano and orchestra. Through his global travels, during which he conducted his own music, accompanied singers, and

sometimes even played in performances of his works, Respighi gained international acclaim. He became the most celebrated Italian composer of his generation, his honors including election to the Academy of Italy in 1932.

In January of 1936, Respighi was diagnosed with *endocarditis lenta viridans*, a bacterial infection that was at that time incurable. Though the composer had a strong constitution and fought on for four months, the disease depleted his energy, distorted his hearing (the thought of deafness terrified him), and probably affected his work on his last opera, *Lucrezia*. It was completed after his death by his widow, Elsa, who survived the composer by 60 years and labored untiringly to promote his work until her own death in 1996 at the age of nearly 102. She published books; organized conferences, performances, recordings and new editions of his music; and not only completed his unfinished compositions but also produced transcriptions. In 1969 she established Fondo Respighi in Venice to promote Italian music education.

The *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* (or *Laud for the Nativity*) is a beautiful pastoral work that depicts the nativity of Jesus as the shepherds might have seen it. Respighi employs several archaic forms and devices: madrigals ("Contenti ne andremo"), Monteverdi-like arioso ("Seignor tu sei descieso"), some plainchant, and even a touch of fugue in the "Gloria" section. In addition to chorus, a small wind orchestra and piano, the work features three soloists: soprano ("The Angel"), mezzo-soprano ("Mary"), and tenor ("The Shepherd").

The *Lauda* is based on a text by Jacopone da Todi, a 13th-century Franciscan poet who was originally a successful practitioner of the law. In 1267 he married a deeply religious noblewoman who did penance for her all-too-worldly husband. The next year when Jacopo insisted that she attend a public tournament against her wishes, his wife was killed when the stands in which she sat collapsed. Following this tragic event, the devastated Jacopo abandoned his profession and his belongings, joined the Franciscan order after a decade of penance, and became a writer of *laude* (psalms), of which he composed some 200. The famous hymn *Stabat Mater Dolorosa* is thought to be one of his numerous passionate, mystical poems. He was eventually excommunicated because of his participation in the Spiritual movement, which called for the Church to embrace the ideal of total poverty, and he was imprisoned in 1298 for signing a manifesto against the pope. He was released in 1303 and withdrew to a hermitage, devoting the last three years of his life to composing mystical poems, and dying on Christmas day in 1306.

Respighi dedicated his *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* to Count Guido Chigi Saracini, founder of the Accademia Chigiana in Siena. The work received its premiere in the count's palace on St. Cecilia's Day, 1930, performed by the Piccolo Coro di Santa Cecilia under the direction of the composer; Elsa Respighi sang the role of Mary. A month later, on December 26, the work was first performed in Rome.

— Lorelette Knowles

VIOLIN
Licia Carlson
Susan Carpenter
Maria Hunt
Fritz Klein**
Avron Maletzky
Leif-Ivar Pedersen*
Stephen Provine
Janet Showalter

* *principal*
** *concertmaster*

VIOLA
Deborah Daoust
Beatrice Dolf
Katherine McWilliams*
Håkan Olsson

CELLO
Julie Reed*
Valerie Ross

BASS
Jo Hansen

FLUTE
Megan Lyden
Shari Müller-Ho*

OBOE
Amy Duerr-Day

ENGLISH HORN
Shannon Hill

BASSOON
Jeff Eldridge
Judith Lawrence*

TRUMPET
David Cole

PERCUSSION
Daniel Oie

KEYBOARD
Robert Kechley*
Sallie Teutsch

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Justin Cole

SOPRANO
Barbara Anderson
Laurel Beachler
Stephanie Bird
Sue Cobb
Crissa Cugini
Kyla Deremer
Dana Durasoff
Ann Erickson
Cinda Freece
Lisa Hoffman
Lorelette Knowles
Jill Kraakmo
Peggy Kurtz
Linda Mendez
Nancy Shasteen
Liesel van Cleeff
Pat Vetterlein

ALTO
Carolyn Avery
Jane Blackwell
Penny Deputy
Deanna Fryhle
Lori Johnston
Ellen Kaisse
Theodora Letz
Adrienne McCoy
Suzi Means
Laurie Medill
Kristin O'Donnell
Christine Rickert
Debra Schilling
Julia Akoury Thiel
Annie Thompson

TENOR
Ralph Cobb
Ronald Carson
Peter Garbes
Dustin Kaspar
Alvin Kroon
Jon Lange
Dan Lee
Timothy Lunde
David Means
Thomas Nesbitt
Vic Royer
Jerry Sams
James Wyatt
David Zapolsky

BASS
Stephen Brady
Steve Carl
Andrew Danilchik
Douglas Durasoff
Marc Fichette
Paul Frost
Patrick McDonald
Dennis Moore
Phil Phillips
John Stenseth
Richard Wyckoff

Soprano CATHERINE HAIGHT is well known to Seattle audiences for her performances of Baroque music. She is an accomplished performer of the oratorio repertoire, including all of the major works of Handel and Bach, as well as music by Vivaldi, Purcell, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Brahms and others. For the past five years, Ms. Haight has been a guest soloist with the Pacific Northwest Ballet in their acclaimed production of *Carmina Burana*. She traveled with them to Australia to perform as part of the Melbourne Festival in 1995, and to the Kennedy Center for three performances in 1996. Her recent recordings include: Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with Philharmonia Northwest; Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Seattle Choral Company; and Handel's *Messiah* with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers under the direction of George Shangrow.

Mezzo-soprano KATHRYN WELD has made a name for herself as a gifted and versatile concert singer. As an early music specialist, she has been a featured soloist with such ensembles as the Philharmonia Baroque, under the direction of Nicholas McGegan, Music at St. John's in New York, the Magnificat Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco, and the Portland Baroque Orchestra, with whom she was heard in a live NPR broadcast of *Messiah*. Ms. Weld made her Carnegie Hall debut to critical acclaim in a performance of Bach's Mass in B minor, with Musica Sacra. She was previously a

winner of Musica Sacra's Bach Vocal Competition. She has also made two solo appearances with the New York Philharmonic, one with Charles Dutoit conducting De Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat*, and the other under Kurt Masur's baton in *Peer Gynt*. In Munich, Germany, she appeared as a soloist with the Bayerischen Rundfunkchor (Bavarian Radio Choir), the Consortium Musicum of Munich, and the Munich Baroque Orchestra, among others. In the Northwest, she has also appeared with the Oregon Symphony, the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Pro Musica, and many others, including numerous performances with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers.

Tenor STEPHEN WALL has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1985. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has soloed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel's *Messiah* and performs that work once again later this month. He was recently featured in a supporting role in Seattle Opera's performances of Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera*.

GLORIA, RV 589

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,

adoramus te, glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi

propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,

Deus pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite,

Jesu Christe,

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,

Filius Patris,

qui tollis peccata mundi:

miserere nobis.

Qui tollis peccata mundi:

suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris:

miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,

tu solus Dominus,

tu solus altissimus,

Jesu Christe,

Cum sancto spiritu,

in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace to men of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,

we worship you, we glorify you.

We give you thanks

for your great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King,

God the Father almighty.

The only-begotten Son,

Lord Jesus Christ,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us.

You take away the sin of the world:

receive our prayer.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father:

have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

LAUDA PER LA NATIVITÀ DEL SIGNORE, P. 166

The Angel

Pastor, voie che vegghiate

sovra la greggia en quista regione;

i vostr'occhi levate,

ch'io son l'Agnol de l'eterna magione.

Ambasciaria ve fone

ed a voie vangelizzo gaudio fino,

ch'è nato el Gesuino

figliuol de Dio, per voie salvar mandato.

Chorus (Angels)

E de ciò ve dò en segno

Che 'n vile stalla è nato el poverello,

e non se fa desdegno

giacere en mezzo al buove e l'asenello.

La mamma en vil pancello

l'ha rinchinato sovra el mangiatoio,

de fieno è 'l covertoio,

ed è descieso così humiliato.

The Shepherd

Segnor, tu sei desceso

de cielo en terra sico l'Agnol parla,

e haine el cuore acceso

a retrovarte in così vile stalla;

lasciane ritrovalla

che te vediam vestito en carne humana.

The Shepherds at the Manger

Ecco quilla stallecta,

vedemce lo fantino povero stare.

La Vergin benedecta

non ha paceglie né fascia per fasciare.

Joseppe non la po' 'itare

ch'è desvenuto per la gran vecchiezza.

A povertà s'avvezza,

quel ch'è Signor senza niun par trovato.

Shepherds, you who watch your flocks

Around here as they graze,

Lift up your eyes, behold me,

angel from the eternal domain.

I come to bring a message

and tidings of great joy,

for baby Jesus has been born,

the Son of God, for your salvation sent.

In sign of this, the poor wee babe,

in lowly stable has been born,

where between the ox and ass

to lie he does not scorn.

His Mother, simply clad,

has laid him in the manger,

of hay is all his coverlet,

so humbly came he down.

Lord, you have descended

to earth from Heaven as the angel said,

and our hearts do burn to find you

in such a lowly cattle-shed;

guide us to the place

that we may see you clothed in mortal flesh.

Lo, here is the stable,

and here we see the poor baby lying.

The blessed Virgin

has neither food nor clothes in which to swaddle him,

Joseph cannot help her

for he is old and faint.

He accustoms himself to poverty,

he who, though Lord, seemingly has nought.

Mary

O car dolce mio figlio, da me se' nato sì poverello!
Joseppe el vechiarello, quil ch'è tuo bailo, qui s'è adormentato.
Figliuol, gaudio perfecto, che di sentire a la tua nativitate!
Strengrendome t'al pecto, non me curava de nulla povertade,
tanta suavitate tu sì me daie de quil gaudio eterno,
o figliuol tenerello!

O fonte de' alimento co' tanta povertà te se' inchinato.

Figliuol, t'ho partorito!

En tanta povertà te veggio nato!

Toglie nostre manteglie...

Tu se' l'Edio en finito,

che per l'humana gente s'è 'ncarnato.

O Madre santa...e non te fare schifa, vestir di povereglie...

Non ho dua sie fasciato:

te vo' io fasciare con quisto mio pancello,

o figliuolo poverello,

co l'ha promesso il pate tuo biato.

...che stanno in selva colla greggia tanta.

El figliuol ammanta, che non alita el fieno, sua carne pura.

Chorus (Angels)

Gloria, laude e onore laude a te,

Sire del cielo onnepotente.

Shepherds

Segnor, puoie ch'hai degnato

di nascere oggi sì poveramente

da' lume a tutta gente

ché null'omo sia de tal dono engrato.

To Mary:

Contenti n'andremo

se un poco noie lo podessemo toccare.

E però te ne pregamo

quanto noie siam pastori,

siam pastori de poco affare.

Mary

Voglio ve consolare

perchè torniate lieti a vostra gregge,

quel ch'è fatto legge

acciò che il servo sia recomparato.

Chorus

Laude, gloria e onore a te.

Gloria a te, o Sire del ciel (onnepotente). Gloria!

Gloria in excelsis Deo

e in terra pace a chi ha el buon volere.

Al mondo tanto reo tu se' donato,

non per tuo dovere,

ma sol per tuo piacere.

Noi te laudiam, Signore,

glorificando la tua maestade.

Mary

Tenuta so' a Dio patre

rendere onore e gloria in sempiterno,

pensando ch'io son matre

del suo figliuolo, el quale è Dio eterno.

E tanto è il gaudio superno

basciando ed abbracciando sì caro figlio,

bello sovr'onne giglio

che a me el cuore è sì de stemperato.

Io sento un gaudio nuovo, e tutta renovata io so en fervore!

The Angel

Or ecco ch'è nato il Salvatore! Amen.

O sweet and darling baby, born of me to such poverty!

Joseph the old man, who is your guardian, has fallen asleep.

Little son, joy's perfection, I feel at your birth!

As I cradle you in my arms, poverty means nothing,
such sweetness as you bring me fills me with eternal joy.

O tender little son!

O fountain of all bounty, with such humbleness you have stooped.

Little son, I gave you birth!

In such poverty I see you born!

Take our cloaks for covering...

You are the infinite God

who for the human race now flesh becomes.

O blessed Mary...do not be offended by our ragged garments...

As I have no swaddling clothes

I will wrap you in my shift,

poor little son of mine,

the promise of your holy Father.

...worn by so much work with flocks in fields.

Wrap the baby round, that his untainted flesh smell not of hay.

Glory, praise and honor be to you,

omnipotent Lord of Heaven.

Lord, you have deigned

to be born today in such poverty!

Give light to all men,

that none may be ungrateful for such a gift.

In joy would we depart,

Could we but touch him for a moment.

And this we beg of you,

We who are but shepherds,

Shepherds, men of humble calling.

Comfort would I give you

that you may return to your flocks in joy,

for it is now disposed

that the servant be redeemed.

Glory, praise and honor be to you,

glory to you, O (omnipotent) Lord of Heaven. Glory!

Glory to God in the highest

and peace on earth to men of goodwill.

To a guilty world you have pledged yourself,

not out of duty,

but because such was your pleasure.

We praise you, Lord,

and glorify your majesty

To God the Father I am bound

To give honor and glory for ever,

for that I am the mother

of his son who is the eternal God.

Such is the joy sublime

as I kiss and cradle so dear a child,

more beautiful than any lily,

that my heart swells within me.

I feel a new delight, and seemingly reborn, I thrill with fervor!

Hail the birth of the Savior now! Amen.

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