

St. Agnes

O little maid, so fair, so mild
So like a lily undefiled.
My heart goes out to thee.
The halo round thy radiant face
Is born of prayer, and love and grace
And spotless purity.

O tiny winsome Bride of Christ,
Ne'er for one moment sin-enticed,
What power still is thine!
Who is there bears thy beauteous name,
But feels her inmost heart aflame
To share thy love divine.

Thine eyes aglow, like glimm'ring star
That led the faithful Magi far,
Dispel the gloom of sin,
And flood the soul with strength untold
To spurn the world, as thou, of old
Its lurings and its din.

Where thou art loved, O Pure as Snow,
There host of Christ's sweet lilies blow,
With hearts of virgin gold—
Like thee their tender lives exhale,
A tender beauty, fragrant, frail.
A sweetness manifold.

O Agnes! little Lamb of God!
No saintlier maiden ever trod
The streets of pagan Rome
Obtain that soon, I, too, may sing
The glorious praises of my King
In Heaven's starry dome.

—Percy Vernon.