

All Hallows in the West.

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Christmas in the Sanctuary.

'Tis winter, but to faithful hearts 'tis spring;
And truly God, as longer grow the days
And stronger the sun's beams, casts His bright rays
Upon His Church's swiftly dawning year,
To bid us forth from Advent gloom and fear
And lift our hearts to Him and joyful sing.

Our happy souls mid vernal musings dwell,
And all responsive, buds and blossoms bright,
Of lovely forms and varied hues, mid light
From countless flames, round cross and altar meet
The wistful eye, through veil of incense sweet;
While, from the organ, chords melodious swell.

O bless'd fulfilment of the prayers and dreams
Of men of old, when, in the silent night,
The shepherds heard the voice of angel bright;
And hast'ning saw the Shepherd born to lead
His docile sheep to pastures, green to feed,
In certain safety, by the quiet streams.

But lo, the myst'ries from their eyes concealed:
The simple, wond'ring shepherds but a child
Beheld; nor knew that He, Who lay and smiled
So sweet, was Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, King,
And Spotless Lamb for the world's ransoming
Ere long, by desert seer, to be revealed.

O well may little children eager make
This blissful day their own: O may they learn,
Who early towards the Blessed Infant turn,
To imitate His gentle, gracious charms:
What joy to those uplifted by His arms
In age, who still are children for His sake.

What those poor shepherds saw, we seem to see;
The queen-like, calm-eyed, virgin-mother pure;
Her spouse, once justly questioning, now sure
Of all the angel told; and Him Whose birth
Brought mercy from high heav'n to sinful earth;
The holiest type of happy family.

And well may we before God's altar bring,
With our memorial of Christ's natal day,
Prayers for our kin and dear ones far away;
Yea, e'en for those, unseen, who waiting rest
Expectant of His promise to the blest,
When partings dread will cease and sorrowing.