



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast December 26, 2021 "Christmas"

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

*'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled
That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim and wondering hunters heard the hymn,
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

*Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found;
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round
But as the hunter braves drew nigh the angel song rang loud and high
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

*The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

*O children of the forest free, O seed of Manitou
The holy Child of earth and heaven is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy who brings you beauty peace and joy.
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

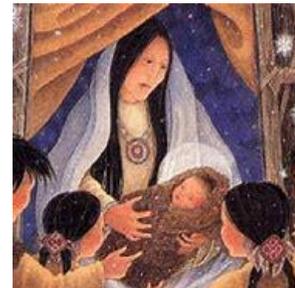
"How Will we Greet Christ?"



If you are like me, you grew up with a Christmas picture something like the picture on the left, shepherds visiting the newborn child in a barn with Mary and Joseph and the animals looking on. Or maybe we think of a scene with elaborately dressed "wise men" with fabulous presents.

But the poem above paints a different scene, mother and child in a long house deep in the woods of North America. This poem became a

hymn and is probably the oldest hymn written in North America. It is the collaborative work of the Huron people and a French missionary, Jean Brebeuf, written in the mid 1600's. Today we can find this hymn in many hymnals.



When the hymn was translated into English from French about 150 years ago, the translator, Jesse Edgar Middleton, tells the story of Jesus' birth from the perspective of Huron everyday life. Middleton's story of the birth of Christ used Huron folk symbols, such as 'rabbit skin' for 'swaddling clothes' and 'gifts of fox and beaver pelt' for the Magi's present." Middleton's version maintains the Algonquian name for God, Gitchi Manitou. Most hymns we see today have used "God" instead of Gitchi Manitou.

What is the important message for us this Christmas? While Christ's birth was an event which happened far away and long ago, Christ is also here and with us now. We may still think of shepherds and angels and wise men this Christmas; but, the same time, let us try to think what the nativity scene would be today and what presents we would bring to honor the child?

Merry Christmas!

Special prayers this week: for those traveling to visit families; those who have suffered from the terrible storms in the US; those who are sick; Pete; Elizabeth.

Let us not forget to pray: for peace on earth and goodwill among all people; for unity and brotherhood within the world and the Church God has built, and especially in this our own faith communities; the poor and homeless; the cold and hungry; the oppressed; those who mourn; let us remember all who have gone before us to the other shore filled with light.



On Christmas we light the candle of hope, hope for ourselves, and for God's world; the candle of faith, the promise of God's love for us and all creation; the candle of joy, joy to the world, and within our whole being; the candle of peace, peace in our hearts, and on earth; and we light the Christ candle, the light of the world, the light of possibility. Amen
