

Christmas Season Devotionals

Week Three – Day 14

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

“The carol originates from 16th-century England and the earliest known printed edition was published in 1760. It has been known by different names throughout history, including ‘God Bless You, Merry Gentlemen’ and ‘God Rest Ye, Merry Christians’, and even makes an appearance in Charles Dickens’ novel, *A Christmas Carol*, early on when Scrooge is terrifying carol singers with his foul temper.” (By Rosie Pentreath, Classic FM, classicfm.com) “With the changing of word meanings and difference in cultures, it is hard for Americans today to understand what the English peasants were singing about 500 years ago-unless you know the story behind the song. The 15th century church sang only dark, somber songs usually written in Latin. When Christmas rolled around each year, songs of joy and happiness were not allowed in the church. To overcome this problem, the people took the singing of Christmas songs to the streets of jolly old London town. Soon, the waites, the night watchmen of that time, would be singing *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen* as they walked the streets of London.” (by Adam Miller, One Place, oneplace.com)

Craft Idea – The Good Shepherd: <https://www.catholicicing.com/good-shepherd-learning-activity-and/>

Video by Glee, the Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2gC3ZJGPwg>

God rest ye merry gentlemen	‘Fear not,’ said the angel,
Let nothing you dismay	Let nothing you affright,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour	This day is born a Savior
Was born on Christmas Day	Of a pure virgin bright,
To save us all from Satan’s pow’r	To free all those who trust in Him
When we were gone astray	From Satan’s power and might.’
O tidings of comfort and joy	O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy	Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy	O tidings of comfort and joy

From God our Heavenly Father	Now to the Lord sing praises
A blessed angel came;	And with true love and brotherhood
And unto certain shepherds	Each other now embrace
Brought tidings of the same,	This holy tide of Christmas
How that in Bethlehem was born	All other doth deface.
The Son of God by Name.	O tidings of comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy,	Comfort and joy
Comfort and joy	O tidings of comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy	

Questions/statements for individuals or families to respond to:

- Today, the word, *merry*, means cheerful, joyous, laughing. How have you felt when you are around this kind of person?
- When this song was written, *merry* meant *mighty* and *powerful*. How do you think the birth of Jesus helps with turning the weakness of fear into the power of joy and peace? (Read Jeremiah 23:1-6)
- Is there someone you know who is being bullied? How can you pray for and give them courage, like God has given you courage because of the birth of Jesus?

Digging Deeper

1. Read Psalm 46:1-3; Proverbs 18:10; Nehemiah 8:10; Deuteronomy 31:6; John 14:26-27. What do these references tell you about God’s comfort in times of distress?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-9; 12:7-10 and come to an understanding of why we suffer at times?
3. How do you suppose it’s possible to experience comfort and joy in the midst of heartache?