

December 24, 2024



Daily Reflections

 Center for
Spiritual
Development

O HOLY NIGHT

By Julie Mussché

From "O Holy Night"

*"O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope -- the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn..."*

O HOLY NIGHT, JOHN SULLIVAN DWIGHT'S VERSION, VERSE 1

Reflection

Justice

O Holy Night

Growing up in a household with my grandmother, there was always a contest as to whether I would be reared as a Catholic or a Lutheran. Both my mother

and aunt had converted to Catholicism (to my Grandma's chagrin), and I had been baptized, not once but twice, Roman Catholic. However, Grandma was ever persistent in exposing me to our family's Lutheran heritage, Missouri Synod with German traditions. This meant occasionally attending Christmas Eve services with her. Now, as a young girl, this was a big deal and meant dressing up and staying up late after spending the evening decorating the tree and celebrating with family.

One year, I think I was about six, we were driven to a church in Long Beach and we found a place to sit very close to the choir. The church was beautifully decorated for the season, and I loved being close to the singing and bell choir. At some point, an older woman, probably about 35, stepped forward and all eyes in the church focused on her.

The accompaniment started gently, and the woman started singing. She had a serious vibrato which caused her jowls to jiggle and seemed to oscillate off the walls of the church when she hit a high note. I started laughing hysterically, barely catching my breath, mortifying my grandmother and causing a look from the pastor. As you might imagine, I was chided and shushed. Not quite certain what the big deal was, I learned later that the song was "O Holy Night" and it was my mother's all-time favorite Christmas song, which had a very important message.

In high school, as a member of an a capella choir, O Holy Night was a featured piece in a repertoire of about a dozen songs we recorded and sang at concerts all over Orange County. It ultimately became one of my favorites, not only for the breadth of the music but also for the lyrics and the message it proclaimed. With the last verse, love one another, God's law of love and peace, salvation for all, praise God's name is sung out clearly as the punctuating message.

On this Christmas Eve, this Holy Night, the songs we sing help to remind us of the wonder, mystery and beauty of the night that Christ was born. Infant and redeemer, human and Divine, it is breathtaking to consider the miracle of it all. For reflection and prayer today, you are invited to enjoy your favorite Christmas songs, reflecting on the poetry as well as the melodies while holding it all in prayer. May the wonder of this special day warm your heart and spirit.



Christmas Star

Image by assistantua

If you enjoy reading our reflections and would like to make a donation towards this ministry, click the button below!

Support CSD



Center for
Spiritual
Development

COMPANIONS ON THE
SACRED JOURNEY



[Visit Website](#)

[714-744-3172](tel:714-744-3172)

[Join Mailing
List](#)



To “Unsubscribe” from the daily reflections while remaining on our general mailing list, please [email us](#). The unsubscribe function below will unsubscribe you from all emails from CSD. Please know we will never share your information.

Center for Spiritual Development | 434 A South Batavia Street | Orange, CA 92868 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)