

Glory and Grace

Fruit of the mystic Rose, as of that Rose the Stem.
Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem!
Here is Glory!
Here is Grace!
We can see his infant face.
Shepherds wonder: He is here in the arms of Mary.

Sing Alleluia! Christ is born in Bethlehem.

There in the stars of highest heaven a sign appears.
Wise men find they can't believe their eyes or ears.
King of Glory!
King of Grace!
Kneeling in a sacred space,
Magi find the new-born King in the arms of Mary.

Sing Alleluia! Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Sing we now of Glory and Grace,
for Jesus left his heavenly place,
and we can see his infant face rest in the arms of Mary.

Sing Alleluia! Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Performance Notes

Thanks for singing my little carol. It was written specifically for a competition but I'm quite satisfied with it.

The piece is written for amateur-but-experienced SATB (and conductor) with some splitting in the bass for gents who find their bottom F lacks the necessary power. Ideally the section should split so a third of the basses sing the upper notes and two thirds the lower.

The dotted rhythm of the time signature is deliberately lost in the homophonous opening and subverted through the use of 5 and 7 crotchet bars. The first three beats of these irregular bars should be sung as a bar of compound duple, and then the remaining straight crotchets sung with bounce to gently disrupt the rhythm without interrupting the flow of the piece. Note the terminal rest, clearly limiting the final note to a crotchet, without a relaxation of tempo. This should be gentle and not percussive but rather neat, allowing the sound to be carried by the acoustic of the venue.

Caesurae at the end of bars 6 and 55 should be directed by the conductor and provide a clear break (for a quick breath at least) but without allowing the sound of the previous bar to fully die away. The fermata in bar 6 should be conducted according to the venue and context, not simply counted an additional beat.

Lyrics have been taken from a variety of traditional sources, often just one or two words serving as the inspiration for a line of text. The exception is the opening stanza, which was inspired directly by the second verse of "Crown Him with Many Crowns" by Bridges (1800-1894) as included in *Hymns Ancient & Modern: A New Standard*:

*Crown him the Virgin's Son,
the God incarnate born,
whose arm those crimson trophies won
which now his brow adorn:
Fruit of the mystic Rose,
as of that Rose the Stem:
the Root whence mercy ever flows,
the Babe of Bethlehem.*