



# Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

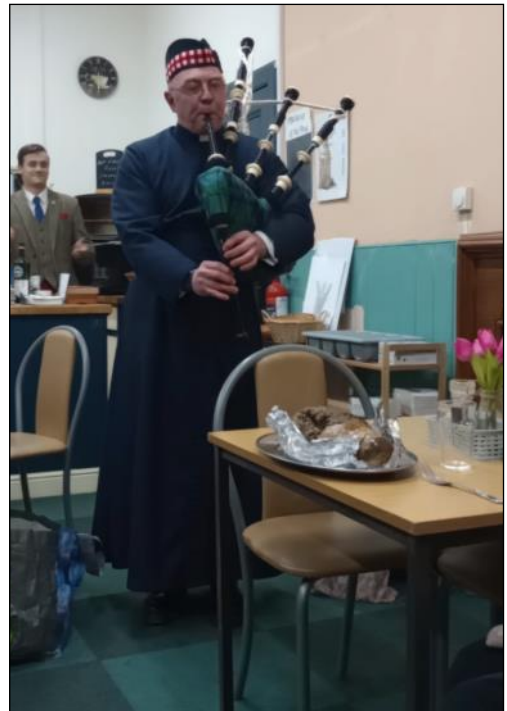
December 2022

*"The will to do, the soul to dare"*

Dear Faithful,

As we approach the end of the civil year, with the new liturgical year already begun, this edition is slightly late due to the absence of Fr. Hennick for his annual holiday in the United States. November, in his absence, turned out to be a very busy month. We would like to thank Fr. Brucciani and Fr. Laisney who came up to replace him for the Sunday Masses as well as the feast of St. Andrew at the end of the month. I remember, in Mexico, the Feast of our Lady of Guadalupe (which occurs on the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month) was not a holy day of obligation, but the idea that a Mexican would not go to Mass on that day is, even today, inconceivable. We're not quite at that stage yet with St. Andrew's feast day here in Scotland but attendance continues to grow and hopefully will rival that of our Mexican brethren very soon.

Work on the altar in Edinburgh is progressing and, hopefully, should be finished by Christmas, at least insofar as making the altar usable. There are all sorts of details and finish-



**St. Andrew's Night in Edinburgh**

ing touches which need to be applied, but I am hoping for midnight Mass at our new altar.

This month also sees the Rorate Masses being celebrated once a week at our Lady's altar just before dawn. We've been doing these for some years now and what has generally happened is that a very modest attendance at the first develops into an enthusiastic crowd at the last. Since we're celebrating the coming of the Sun of Justice into the world at Christmas, these votive Masses of our Lady are necessarily said rather early for many, particularly in the cold weather, but the symbolism of Christ coming in the darkness through His Blessed Mother merits a visit from any who are able to attend.

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)





# A SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS CAROL



It might seem somewhat contrived to suggest that possibly the most quintessentially English novella of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has a Scottish connection. It was, however, while he was in Edinburgh that Dickens came across a gravestone in Canongate Kirkyard which, he supposed, read: “Ebenezer Lennox Scroggie – a mean man”. The gravestone, of course, does not say this at all but merely listed his profession as a “meal man” or a corn merchant. In a nation noted for its frugality, Dickens thought it would have “shrivelled” Scroggie’s soul to bear “such a terrible thing to eternity”.

Scroggie, who died in 1836, could not have been a man more unlike his namesake in the novella than he was. On King George’s visit to Scotland in 1822, all the alcohol he consumed was provided by Ebenezer Scroggie. His loose moral life had him expelled from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and he is known for many illicit liaisons with serving girls in the local churchyards.

Since a ‘Christmas carol’ only occurs once in the whole book and that towards the beginning of the novella (when Scrooge chases away a young lad venturing “God rest ye merry gentlemen” with a ruler), it might seem odd to name his best known work after the type of songs, some secular (even then), some Christian, which, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were principally sung at Christmas. His hope for his work was, however, that, much like a carol, his story would warm hearts and make people think: as he put it, “May it haunt their houses pleasantly”. Like a carol, his story evoked Christmas traditions such as merry-making, dancing, game-playing and feasting, while acting as a reminder of the pain, suffering, poverty and inequality that existed outside, beyond the frosted panes of happy homes, making an appeal for love and Christian charity.

It was also performed in public, just as Christmas music had been for centuries (carols had typically been sung in the street since the Catholic Middle Ages). A Christmas Carol was the first story Dickens read to a large audience, It became his favourite work for public performance, and the most popular. And of course it has that famous refrain: “God bless us, every one!”

The components of Dickens’ “Christmas Carol in prose” perhaps offer a clue to what makes for a good carol: a work that is accessible and memorable, and contains vivid imagery that encapsulates the Christmas message and a stirring chorus.



**One of the manuscripts which survived the wreckers, now kept at St. Andrews**

As has been mentioned in previous editions of this publication, the amount of Scottish Catholic music, along with the stained glass, vestments even the greater and lesser church buildings, is pitifully small. The Church music was burnt with only a few manuscripts surviving. Popular tradition continued but it was actively suppressed by the Kirk Sessions and did so mainly in the Highlands.

Probably the oldest Scottish festive song still regularly sung is *Hac In Anni Janua* from the 13<sup>th</sup> century St. Andrews Music Book. Dealing with the turn of the year into January, it is surprisingly modern, about making resolutions and moving on. It has a folk dance type tune, as you might expect of a Hogmanay song. It is also, significantly, in Latin.

One of the positive things the early ‘reformers’ did was to give popular Latin tunes new words. The Wedderburn brothers from Dundee did this for *In Dulci Jubilo. Ecce Novum Gaudium* was, however, never translated though it is credited to an anonymous 17<sup>th</sup> century Scottish tradition. Its jolly, rhythmic melody certainly does not suggest it was composed in the dour aftermath of the 16<sup>th</sup> century destruction and probably predates that period by a century or more.

*Nou Lat Us Sing* started life as a welcoming song for James VI on his return to the Scottish capital after a period away and was then given Christmas words. In all likelihood it was composed by one of the dwindling band of musical maestros trained in the pre-Reformation period. *Angels From The Realms Of Glory* brings together an old French tune and the words of a Scots-born campaigning newspaper editor of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, James Montgomery. Finally, the carol, now principally known by the Britten setting of the last two



verses and ending with what has now become its title, Balulalow, was another contribution from the Wedderburn brothers. The first verse, however, gives away its origin as a loose translation from the German.

“I come from hevin heich to tell  
the best nowells that e'er befell.  
To you thir tythings trew I bring  
and I will of them say and sing”.

This, then, is a Scots version of Luther's *Vom Himmel Hoch da komm' ich her*.

With the exception of the few Latin hymns which have survived, these are all Protestant carols. To find Scotland's Catholic carols we need to move northwards and westwards to the Gaelic folk tradition. Of these, perhaps the most widely known is *Tàladh Chriosda*, (Christ Child's Lullaby), also known as *Tàladh ar Slànuighear*, which is sung at midnight Mass on Christmas Eve in the islands of Barra, South Uist and Eriskay in the Outer Hebrides. It was originally set to the tune of a Gaelic ballad called *Grief For The Son Of Arois* and is typical of Pipe music with its use of the mixolydian mode and gentle scotch-snap rhythm. The original carol has 29 verses and was written by Father Ranald Rankin, originally from Fort William, for his Moidart parishioners probably some time before he emigrated to Australia with many of his congregation at the time of the Clearances.

*Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh is m'eudail thu,  
m'iunntas ùr is m'èibhneas thu.  
mo mhacan àluinn, ceutach thu  
Chan fhiù mi fhèin bhi 'd dhàil.*

Though it is never sung in English, a translation (always quite tricky with two languages which are so fundamentally different) might be: My love, my love and my darling, Thou, My treasure and my joy, Thou, My beautiful graceful little son, Thou, Unworthy to be near Thee, I.



**Moidart, the birthplace of *Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh, is m'eudail Thu***

Although not sung in the original Gaelic here, *Child In The Manger*, with words originally in Gaelic by Mary Macdonald, 1789-1872, and translated into English a few years later, is sung to the tune which has been named

*Bunessan*, after the coastal village near where Mary lived in the Ross of Mull. Outwith Scotland, Eleanor Farjeon's words, *Morning Has Broken*, break the Christmas connection but continue to make known the traditional Gaelic melody.

Other distinctively Gaelic contributions to Christmas music include *Of These Four Letters*, referring to the spelling of 'Mary'. Its tune is known as *Johnny Faa* or the *Gypsy Laddie* and is constructed much like mediaeval carols mixing Latin phrases among the English words.



And finally, there is thought to be a connection between the Jacobite rebellion and one of the most popular carols of all, *O Come All Ye Faithful* (*Adeste Fideles*). The carol has been interpreted as a coded message in support of the Jacobite cause. No one knows exactly where the tune or words come from, but it had turned up in the Benedictine Abbey in Douai, France, by the 1740s because that is where English Catholic exile to France, John Francis Wade, is thought to have found it. He copied it out several times and included it in volumes of religious music. It was published in England in 1781 though its Latin text (originally) must have hinted at its Catholic origin.

Back in the 1740s, however, the earliest of Wade's copies is dedicated to "regem nostrum Jacobum" i.e. James III, the son of the overthrown king James II and VII of Scotland. Copies of the hymn were apparently often to be found in Catholic enclaves in Britain. Some researchers have suggested that 'fideles' was a term aimed at Catholics and that "born the king of angels" (regem angelorum) could be a pun on 'king of the English' (regem Anglorum), as James was seen by supporters as the rightful English, and indeed Scottish, king, making the song part of the Jacobite ferment. Similarly 'Bethlehem' was often a Jacobite code word for England, the birthplace of James. If this is true, as Dr. Andrew Gant, the musician, composer, and latterly politician, notes: "It was too subtle for the stolid Hanoverian brain. Nobody noticed. The hymn was happily accepted into Georgian society".

# Mass Schedule

	Carlisle	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	11am		7am
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December ( <i>First Friday</i> )		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December ( <i>First Saturday</i> )		11am	11am
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> December — 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> December			
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> December— Immaculate Conception		6.30pm	6.30pm
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		7am
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December		11am	11am
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> December — 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> December			7am
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	11am		
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> December		11am	11am
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> December — 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	11am		
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December			6.30pm
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	7.15am		
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	11am		
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December	7.15am		
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> December		11am	11am
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> December — Nativity of Our Lord		Midnight & 11am	Midnight & 11am
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	11am		
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> December	11am		
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> December	7.15am		
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> December		11am	11am

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If you require any further information concerning one of these places, or need to talk to a priest e.g. in case of emergency for the Sacraments, please ring the phone number mentioned in contact details.