



Did you Know...?

- The most peaceful of all Christmas Carols was written in a hurry - probably in 45 minutes, during one particularly chaotic Christmas Eve. The church's pastor and music director who composed this ageless Christmas song were ages 26 and 31

Did you Know...?

- The most beloved Christmas solo was written as a diatribe to persuade people to abolish slavery
- For the same reason, this same Christmas song was banned by many churches for almost 50 years

O Holy Night

- The priest of Roquemare, France asked local poet (& occasional churchgoer) Placide Cappeau to write a Christmas poem
- Cappeau wrote *Minuit, Chretiens* (*Midnight, Christians*), then asked his (Jewish) friend Adolphe Adam to set the poem to music
- Song performed three weeks later at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, 1847

O Holy Night

- 1855 - translated from French to English by John Sullivan Dwight
- Dwight was a Unitarian and ardent abolitionist; he shaded his translation to speak about slavery
- The song became immediately popular in America, especially in the Northern states

O Holy Night

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new & glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts
by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the Wise Men
from Orient land.

The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials born to be our Friend.
He knows our need -
to our weakness is no stranger.
Behold your King, before him lowly bend!
Behold your King, before him lowly bend!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break,
for the slave is our brother,
And in his name all oppression shall cease.

Sweet hymns of joy
in grateful chorus raise we;
Let all within us
praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord!
O praise His name forever!
His pow'r and glory ever more proclaim!
His pow'r and glory ever more proclaim!

Silent Night

- On Christmas eve, 1818, at the (newly built) Church of St. Nicholas in Obernorf, the organ broke
- The assistant priest, Joseph Mohr, wrote the words and turned to the church organist, Franz Gruber, for the music

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is
bright Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant so tender and mild, Sleep in
heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia.
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Wondrous star, lend thy light.
With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King.
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Minuit, Chrétiens (original French of "O Holy Night")

*Minuit, chrétiens, c'est l'heure solennelle,
Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous
Pour effacer la tache originelle
Et de Son Père arrêter le courroux.
Le monde entier tressaille d'espérance
En cette nuit qui lui donne un Sauveur.
Peuple à genoux, attends ta délivrance.
Noël, Noël, voici le Rédempteur,
Noël, Noël, voici le Rédempteur !*

*De notre foi que la lumière ardente
Nous guide tous au berceau de l'Enfant,
Comme autrefois une étoile brillante
Y conduisit les chefs de l'Orient.
Le Roi des rois naît dans une humble crèche :
Puissants du jour, fiers de votre grandeur,
A votre orgueil, c'est de là que Dieu prêche.
Courbez vos fronts devant le Rédempteur.
Courbez vos fronts devant le Rédempteur.*

*Le Rédempteur a brisé toute entrave :
La terre est libre, et le ciel est ouvert.
Il voit un frère où n'était qu'un esclave,
L'amour unit ceux qu'enchaînait le fer.
Qui lui dira notre reconnaissance,
C'est pour nous tous qu'il naît, qu'il souffre et meurt.
Peuple debout ! Chante ta délivrance,
Noël, Noël, chantons le Rédempteur,
Noël, Noël, chantons le Rédempteur !*

O Holy Night (literal translation)

*Midnight, Christians, it is the solemn hour,
When God-man descended to us
To erase the stain of original sin
And to end the wrath of His Father.
The entire world thrills with hope
On this night that gives it a Savior.
People kneel down, wait for your deliverance.
Christmas, Christmas, here is the Redeemer,
Christmas, Christmas, here is the Redeemer!*

*May the ardent light of our Faith
Guide us all to the cradle of the infant,
As in ancient times a brilliant star
Guided the Oriental kings there.
The King of Kings was born in a humble manger;
O mighty ones of today, proud of your greatness,
It is to your pride that God preaches.
Bow your heads before the Redeemer!
Bow your heads before the Redeemer!*

*The Redeemer has overcome every obstacle:
The Earth is free, and Heaven is open.
He sees a brother where there was only a slave,
Love unites those that iron had chained.
Who will tell Him of our gratitude,
For all of us He is born, He suffers and dies.
People stand up! Sing of your deliverance,
Christmas, Christmas, sing of the Redeemer,
Christmas, Christmas, sing of the Redeemer!*