

Go, Tell

“Alleluia. Unto us a child is born. O Come let us adore him. Alleluia.”

What would Christmas be like without music? I love the music of Christmas – classical, traditional, folk, pop, country. Music is the way we share our joy, our love, our faith. The birth of Jesus, the Son of God, is proclaimed first in the music of the angels, “Glory to God in the highest ...” The Gloria is such a powerful proclamation of faith that we say it or sing it at the start of every Holy Eucharist through most of the year. At Christmas, we remember the ancient words of St. Augustine, “Those who sing, pray twice.”

We couldn’t find room in this service for one of my favorite Christmas songs, “Go, tell it on the Mountain.” We did sing it at the 3:00 p.m. service. Maybe our Music Director will find another service to fit it in this Christmas. The refrain is simply “Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born...”

I could not believe the number of artists who have recorded “Go tell it on the Mountain.” Dozens, including a few you may have heard of:

Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra 1964

Simon and Garfunkel 1964

Bob Marley 1971

Dolly Parton 1990

Garth Brooks 1999

James Taylor 2004

Little Big Town 2006

This song, first sung by slaves, later became a part of the African American spiritual tradition, until all the mainline denominations began to use it in the mid-20th century. It reminds us of St. Luke’s story about the shepherds.

The shepherds were the first to come to visit the baby Jesus. The shepherds were the first to go and tell others about this child, this divine birth, God with us, God on earth. The shepherds were the first evangelists sharing the Good News.

So it’s this historic African American Christmas song that inspires us to follow the shepherds – to sing of God in Christ – to sing of God’s love come to earth – to sing of joy, of peace, of love.

Now even if you are not much of a singer; like me, maybe you can’t carry a tune. You can still sing and you can go tell the story of Jesus – tell how Jesus has made a difference in your life – tell how Christmas is about a love stronger than death. Tell how the baby Jesus reveals God with us. Tell your story and help change the world, just as the shepherds did on this night long ago.

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O Come let us adore him. Alleluia.”