

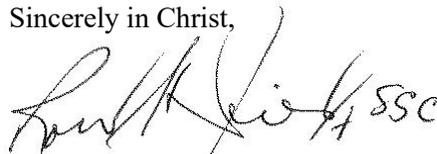
the Son leapt out of eternity into Time across the hills of frankincense and the mountains of myrrh, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

“And, brethren, just let me stop one moment to say, mark you, *“the fullness of the time.* God’s dealings with His own people are not according to the dates of man, but according to His own dates, when the fullness of time comes. When at the marriage of Cana of Galilee our Blessed Lady spoke to Him, He said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” When it has come, He turned the water into wine. And when the fullness of time comes to God’s chosen people—to you who are His chosen people—when God’s time is ready, He will come. He will always come according to His own time; “He will come and save us.” (see Isaiah xxv.9) Remember how the Bible ends: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come... Even so, come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (Rev. xxii. 17 & 20) It is always the same all through your life—God’s time—and He will come.”

We have expectations as we speak to God. His time is not always our time. The one thing that we can be sure of is that if we want Him, He will always be there and “it is always the same all through your life—God’s time—and He will come”!!!

May you have a wonderful Christmas!

Sincerely in Christ,



Fr. Robert S.H. Mansfield, SSC



THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA  
*A Missionary District of the Anglican Catholic Church*

The Very Rev. Robert S.H. Mansfield, SSC  
*Vicar General*

December 8, 2017  
Conception of the BVM

*It was like God to choose the night.*

Fr. Andrew, SDC

*It is always the same all through your life—God’s time—and He will come.*

Fr. Arthur Stanton of St. Alban’s, Holborn

*But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.*

Galatians iv.4.

Dear All:

There are a couple of items that I should like to share with you as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord. One is A poem; the other a piece from a sermon. The two writers are both priests whose lives overlap in London, England. They both lived devout lives and they both manifested the incarnation in their ministry to the poor, the down-trodden, and the marginalised.

Henry Ernest Hardy is probably not a name that is instantly recognised by many people. Regardless, he was and is an important figure to some. As a layman, he worked at Oxford House, a “settlement house”, in east London’s Bethnal Green doing administrative work and assisting, practically, the needy of east London.

Later he was ordained priest and served at St. Philip’s Church, Plaistow. Fr. Hardy was a founding member of the Society of the Divine Compassion and, with his profession became known as Fr. Andrew, SDC. With this name he is probably more widely recognised.

In 1916, he became the priest-in-charge of St. Philip’s, Plaistow and served there until his death in 1946 working among the poor.

One bishop described him as a great man, such as God sends only once or twice in a generation. He was highly regarded as a confessor, spiritual guide, religious writer, and a caring priest.

He wrote a lovely little Christmas poem. The title of the poem—*Transeamus Usque Ad Bethlehem*—is a reference to St. Luke 2. 15 where, after the angels, having sung “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men” returned to heaven, “the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which the Lord hath made known unto us.

### *Transeamus Usque Ad Bethlehem*

It was like God to choose the night,  
The dead of night, the winter time,  
That then should ring the heavenly chime,  
That then should shine the eternal Light;

And in the night and in the cold,  
With open door for palace gate,  
With cattle pen for place of state  
And stable straw for royal gold

Meek Mary Mother for a queen,  
Lifting the little hand to bless,  
And poverty for His largesse,  
To hold a court for labouring men.

It was like man to wander far,  
And miss the lowly Bethlehem road;  
O gentle Jesu, Lamb of God,  
Show in our night Thy guiding Star.

“It was like God to choose the night” contrasts with “It was like man to wander far”. The poem closes with the prayer, “O gentle Jesu, Lamb of God / Show in our night Thy guiding Star.” There is an evangelistic call to that lowly Bethlehem Rd. We pray to the Jesus of the manger described in terms of sacrifice of the Cross to show us “in our night”—a parallel of “the valley of the shadow of death” in Psalm 23—the “guiding Star”—a symbol of Epiphany, Theophany.

Many of us find “night” to be a particularly poignant description of the crises of our lives. As in mankind’s night, God came to meet us; in the crises of your life God will meet you.

Fr. Andrew wrote another poem, **Quest**.

### *Quest*

Wide is the wilderness, dark is the night,  
Only a star  
Shining so silverly, flingeth its light  
Ever so far;  
Yet by its lure are led  
Men who have visionèd  
God’s door unlatched  
And held ajar.

‘Restless our souls must be,’ Augustine said,  
Seeking for Thee,  
‘Lord, till they rest in thee,’ uncomforted,  
Athirst for Thee;  
For Thou hast made us so,  
And souls must questing go,  
Thralled by the golden glow,  
Entrancedly

Lord, let not silver spell of that blest star  
Be dimmed for me.  
Constant my questing keep, faring so far,  
Seeking for Thee;  
Seeing what wise men saw,  
Babe in poor stable straw—  
Epiphany.

The other priest, a renowned Anglo-Catholic of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Fr. Arthur Stanton, was a pastor, preacher, and an advocate for the poor, who served St. Alban’s, Holborn, London. Part of his legacy is a book of sermons—Father Stanton’s Last Sermons in St. Alban’s, Holborn.

Fr. Stanton wrote in a sermon for Christmas morning:

“Christ was born on Christmas Day, so we sing and so we say. The 25<sup>th</sup> of December will do just as well as any other date. Why not? We who live under the conditions of minutes, hours, days and months and years, we must have our dates. Let it be so. Christmas is the 25<sup>th</sup> of December. That is man’s computation—that is not God’s. The date with God is this: “When the fullness of time was come.” God Who lives in eternity alone can know “the fullness of time.” And when in the eternal wisdom of God the fullness of time came for which the ages had been waiting, then that hour struck which can never be struck again, and God