

Care Lou Corbett

ADVENT PREFACE II

"Our hearts filled with wonder and praise" - that says more about the meaning and celebration of Christmas than most other greetings & expressions. It's what children can see and understand. May our preparation for Christmas this year be one of wonder - wonder at the mystery of God being born a little child. Many people have heard of Mother Teresa of Calcutta - not so many of her co-worker in an organization of men devoted to the same kind of work, Fr. Andrew. I recently saw a Christmas message of Fr. Andrew to his friends and supporters - in it he writes of the small things, the ordinary people, the littleness of the child at Bethlehem, in which He is like all of us... littleness and wonder. Let's today keep that spirit of wonder, in this Gregorian pliançon for Christmas: *Salve Festa Dies*. Welcome ^{Festive Time} ~~Day of Joy~~

MUSIC "Salve Festa Dies"

PRAYER

And now, two poems of Christmas, also with thoughts of children & wonder:
'Children at Christmas' by Elizabeth Jennings: 'Christmas' by John Betjeman

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And to conclude, with the wonder of Mary, Rolf Harris singing "Mary of the Quiet Eyes"

MUSIC: Rolf Harris

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do call always and ever here to give you thanks that Jesus is our Lord. Today you fill our hearts with joy as we recognize in Christ the revelation of your love. No eye can see his glory as our God, yet now he is seen as one like us. Christ is your Son before all ages, yet now he is born in time. He has come to lift up all things to himself to restore unity to creation; and to lead mankind from exile into your heavenly kingdom.

... Today, in Him a new light has dawned upon the world: God has become one with man, and man has become one again with God. Your eternal Word has taken upon himself our human weakness, giving our mortal nature immortal value. So marvellous is this oneness between God and man that in Christ man restores to man the gift of everlasting life.