

hymn used on Good Friday during the adoration of the cross in the Liturgy of the Hours during Holy Week. However, the same “Crux Fidelis”, a confident melody in a major key, first appeared in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which is when most experts agree it was written.

“Adeste Fideles” was known for a time as “the Portuguese hymn”, because in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was performed at the Portuguese embassy chapel in London. At the time, Latin hymns were looked upon with disfavour as papist by Anglican authorities.

Essential to the hymn’s ongoing popularity was its translation into English. The most influential of dozens of attempts was in 1841, by the Anglican Priest Frederick Oakeley. Four years later, he became a Catholic, following the example of Cardinal John Henry Newman, whose community in Oxford he joined. *(Source: Jesuit Review)*

**-Bernard Kellett**

**Entrance antiphon: Hail, Holy Mother, who gave birth to the King, who rules heaven and earth for ever.**

**First Reading: Numbers 6: 22-27**

**Psalms 66: Response: O God, be gracious and bless us.**

**Second Reading: Galatians 4: 4-7**

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son. Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Luke 2: 16-21**

**Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.**

**Communion Antiphon: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.**



## Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Cycle A, 2023 Weekly Reflection

**O Come All Ye Faithful:** All over the world this Advent and Christmas season, worshippers will hear and sing to some version of “Adeste Fideles.” It is traditionally the final anthem during Midnight Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, just as “O Come All Ye Faithful,” its English language counterpart, is omnipresent at more modest Christmas celebrations. The Latin hymn’s words “Venite adoremus” (O come let us adore him) are familiar from liturgies for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany and part of the song reproduces the Nicene Creed.

The Irish musicologist William H Grattan Flood concluded that the words and music of the song “go back to the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and are to be attributed to a Catholic source and for a Catholic worship. The song was described by Dom John Stephen O.S.B., as having “something Handelian” about it”.

Although its exact sources and origins remain unproven, musicologists agree that the hymn was associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century Catholic layman and music copyist John Francis Wade. He lived in an English Catholic Community that was exiled to France after the failed Jacobite rising in 1745 which tried to restore a Catholic monarch Charles Edward Stuart to the throne of England. The musicologist Bennet Zon claimed that the hymn was a call to arms for the faithful Jacobite’s to return with triumph joy to England (Bethlehem) and venerate the king of angels, that is the English King (Bonnie Prince Charlie).

Even if this argument fails to convince, “Adeste Fideles” is identified in legend with Catholic creators. One such mythical attribution is to King John IV of Portugal, a 17<sup>th</sup> century amateur composer whose works were reportedly destroyed in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755. In addition to “Adeste Fideles”, he also supposedly wrote a setting of the “Crux Fideles” (Faithful cross), a