

= Personent hodie =

" Personent hodie " is a Christmas carol originally published in the 1582 Finnish song book *Piae Cantiones* , a volume of 74 Medieval songs with Latin texts collected by Jaakko Suomalainen , a Swedish Lutheran cleric , and published by T.P. Rutha . The song book had its origins in the libraries of cathedral song schools , whose repertory had strong links with medieval Prague , where clerical students from Finland and Sweden had studied for generations . A melody found in a 1360 manuscript from the nearby Bavarian city of Moosburg in Germany is highly similar , and it is from this manuscript that the song is usually dated .

= = Textual origins = =

The Latin text is probably a musical parody of an earlier 12th century song beginning " intonent hodie voces ecclesie " , written in honour of Saint Nicholas , the patron saint of Russia , sailors and children ? to whom he traditionally brings gifts on his feast day , 6 December . Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott note that two of the verses have an unusual double repeat (' Submersum , -sum , -sum puerum ' ; ' Reddens vir- , vir- , vir- ginibus ') . In ' intonent hodie ' , these were used to illustrate the three boys and three girls saved by St Nicholas from drowning and prostitution , respectively . The text was probably re @-@ written for the Feast of the Holy Innocents (28 December) when choristers and their " boy bishop " traditionally displaced the senior clergy from the choir stalls . The carol is still often associated with Holy Innocents ' Day .

Songs from *Piae Cantiones* continued to be performed in Finland until the 19th century . The book became well known in Britain after a rare copy of *Piae Cantiones* owned by Peter of Nyland was given as a gift to the British Minister in Stockholm . He subsequently gave it to John Mason Neale in 1852 , and it was from this copy that Neale , in collaboration with Thomas Helmore published songs in two collections in 1853 and 1854 respectively .

= = Translations = =

The most common English translation of the text is by " James M. Joseph " , a pseudonym of the composer Jane M. Joseph (1894 ? 1929) . She translates the title as " On this day earth shall ring " , although there are several other English translations . Other versions include Elizabeth Poston 's 1965 " Boys ' Carol " , which translates the first line of the text as " Let the boys ' cheerful noise / Sing today none but joys " and John Mason Neale 's " Let The Song be Begun " , which uses the melody but not the text of the carol . Aidan Oliver 's non @-@ verse translation renders the text as " Today let the voices of children resound in joyful praise of Him who is born for us . "

= = Arrangements = =

The carol became more prominent in England after being arranged for unison voices and orchestra in 1916 by Gustav Holst (1874 ? 1934) , where in its organ reduction it is often used as a processional hymn in church and cathedral services . Holst 's version often forms part of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols , and was last featured in the service broadcast by BBC2 from King 's College Chapel , Cambridge in 2011 following the sixth lesson . This arrangement is sometimes referred to as " Theodoric " in reference to the composer 's middle name (Theodore) .

In addition to Holst 's version , there is a harmonised choral arrangement by Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott in the *New Oxford Book of Carols* , an arrangement by Antony Pitts in the *Naxos Book of Carols* and two arrangements by John Rutter ; one for choir and full orchestra which emulates percussive medieval instrumentation , and another in his anthology *Dancing Day* for female or boys voices with harp or piano accompaniment . The Retrover Ensemble 's performance for Naxos Records pairs the piece with *Gaudete* , another carol from *Piae Cantiones* .

Several recorded versions are arranged in a more folk @-@ oriented style : for example , a performance by Maddy Prior and The Carnival Band on their 1987 album *A Tapestry of Carols* ,

which utilises period instruments . The female a cappella quartet Anonymous 4 have also recorded the song with its original " Intonent hodie " text on their CD Legends of St. Nicholas .

The contemporary English cross @-@ disciplinary music ensemble North Sea Radio Orchestra have recorded a small @-@ ensemble instrumental version of the piece arranged for two violins , cello , clarinet , bassoon , oboe , piano , vibraphone , chamber organ and guitar . This appears on their 2008 album Birds .

Jazz musician Wayne Shorter recorded his arrangement of melody under the name 12th Century Carol on his 2003 album Alegria .

Robert Cummings , writing in the Allmusic guide , states that the " melody is glorious and ebullient in its lively , triumphant manner . It largely consists of bright , resolute three @-@ note phrases whose overall structure gradually rises , then descends . "

= = Text = =

In several versions , such as the Holst arrangement , the third verse has " parvulum inquirunt , Bethlehem adeunt " in place in place of " munera offerunt , parvulum inquirunt . "