

# The Blessings of Mary

Informant/ Performer:  
Will Brady  
Carthage, NC, about 1935

Source:  
Library of Congress AFS 3428 A2  
Collected by Richard Chase

The musical notation is written on four staves in a single system. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the first line of the song, the second staff the second line, the third staff the third line, and the fourth staff the fourth line. The song ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

The ve - ry first bless - ing Ma - ry had, She had the bless - ing of one:  
To think that her son Je - sus Could live a fa - ther's son,  
Could live a fa - ther's son Like Em - ma - nu - el in glo - ry;  
Fa - ther, Son and the Ho - ly Ghost, Through all e - ter - ni - ty

2. The very next blessing Mary had,  
She had the blessing of two:  
To think that her son Jesus  
Could read the Scripture through,  
Could read the Scripture through  
Like Emmanuel in glory;  
*Father, Son and the Holy Ghost,  
Through all eternity.*

3. ...Could set the sinner free

4. ...Could turn the rich to poor

5. ...Could bring the dead to live

6. \* ...Could heal and cure the sick

7. ...Could conquer Hell and Heaven

\* V. 5 from *Journal of American Folklore*  
48:390 (1935)

## Background Information

The English carol 'The joys of Mary' appears first in its fifteenth century form in Brit. Mus. MS. Sloane 2593, in which the joys are five. In later versions they grow: in *Bramley and Stainer* they are seven; *Sandys* gives twelve. American versions of the words from Pennsylvania and Connecticut are in *JAFL* v, 1892; from West Virginia in *Folk Songs of the South* by David Harrington Cox (Harvard University Press, 1925); John Jacob Niles collected words and tune in the Southern Appalachian Mountains; and a version of both was found in Massachusetts. This version collected by Richard Chase from the singing of Mr. Will Brady, Carthage, North Carolina, who said: 'That's a precious song, somebody ought to take care of it' (*JAFL* vol. 48, no. 390, 1935).