

**Texts – *Of the Father’s Love Begotten / I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* – Thomas Lloyd**

1. Of the Father’s love begotten  
Ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega  
He the Source, the Ending he  
Of the things that are, that have been,  
And that future years shall see,  
Evermore and evermore.

1. I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play  
And mild and sweet the words repeat,  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

2. O that birth, forever blessed!  
When the Virgin, full of grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,  
Bore the Saviour of our race,  
And the Child, the world’s Redeemer,  
First revealed his sacred face,  
Evermore and evermore.

2. And in despair I bow’d my head:  
“There is no peace on earth,” I said,  
“For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

3. He assumed this mortal body,  
Coming down to dwell among us,  
Taste our sorrow and our longing  
Bring us healing with his touch.  
In a world made sore by striving  
Reconciling all as one,  
Evermore and evermore. (TL)

3. Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men.”

4. O ye elders, lead the anthems:  
Laud your God in ancient lays!  
Youths and maidens, hymn his glory!  
Infants, bring your songs of praise!  
Guileless voices, in sweet concord  
Unto all the length of days,  
Evermore and evermore.

*John Mason Neale (1854)  
and Henry Williams Baker (1859)*

4. Till, ringing, singing on its way  
The world revolved from night to day.  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

*Divinum Mysterium* is one of the oldest melodies and hymn texts in the Christian tradition. Longfellow’s *Christmas Bells* was written during the American Civil War, probably in response to the severe injuries the poet’s son suffered in November of 1862, and coincidentally just a few years after Prudentius’ Latin text for *Divinum Mysterium* was translated into English. While there are two quite familiar melodies associated with Longfellow’s poem (by John Baptiste Calkin and by Johnny Marks), the melodies used here are the inversion and retrograde forms of the first eight bars of the *Divinum Mysterium* melody itself. - TL

*duration approx. 7½ minutes*