

Lord, the carols sung
in this time of year
speak of the joy and
excitement of your birth
in Bethlehem.

We find that there is
something special about
this season that makes
us feel happier, that makes
our outlook brighter,
and that makes us treat
people with more care,
love, and concern. We
find vast reservoirs of good-
ness and glad tidings
that we did not realize
even existed. We become
more generous, more friendly,
and more considerate.

We humbly thank you
for the gift, the impossi-
ble gift of your Son,
Our Savior. But your
Son was not given to us
so that we should keep
him to ourselves.

Your Son means
life, hope, forgiveness,

freedom and truth.
He is the good news
that must be shared
with all those we
meet, people who are
like us, hungering
and thirsting for
righteousness. He truly
is the good news
for all people in all
seasons at all times.

Help us to truly know
and understand the
meaning of Christmas
and to share this im-
portant season with all
the world. Like the
shepherds who found
you in the manger,
let us go forth, glor-
ifying and praising
you for all we have
heard and seen. Amen

Lord, this truly is the season
of preparation.

We have presents to buy,
cookies to bake, cards to
address, decorations to hang,
and visits to plan.

We look to our calendars
and wonder whether there
will be enough time. Are there
enough days left to finish
everything?

But we know that, unfort-
unate as it is, most of us get
so busy or too distracted
to give enough attention to
this season's spiritual side.
Too many of us follow
the example of the foolish
Virgins who live for to-
day with little concern
for tomorrow.

Too many of us spend
so much time, energy,
and money celebrating
Christmas past that we
have little left for that
glorious day when you
will come to judge the
living and the dead.

Guide us so that we
can celebrate your birth

Two thousand years ago
in Bethlehem in a fitting
manner that will diminish
our expectation and prepara-
tion for that glorious day
when you will come again,
ushering in the era of the
final victory over sin
and death.

May we do our best
every day to prepare the
way for you, Oh Lord-
Anon.

the thosedays came John
the Baptist, preaching
in the wilderness of Judaea,
"Repent, for the Kingdom
of heaven is at hand."

For this is he who was
spoken of by the prophet
Isaiah when he said, The
voice of one crying in
the wilderness: Prepare
the way of the Lord, make
his paths straight."