

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me: A Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the second day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the third day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Three French Hens Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the fourth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Four Calling Birds Three French Hens Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the fifth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the sixth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the eighth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Eight Maids a Milking, Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the ninth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Nine Ladies Dancing, Eight Maids a Milking, Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves, and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the tenth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Ten Lords a Leaping, Nine Ladies Dancing, Eight Maids a Milking, Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Eleven Pipers Piping, Ten Lords a Leaping, Nine Ladies Dancing, Eight Maids a Milking, Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves, and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: Twelve Drummers Drumming, Eleven Pipers Piping, Ten Lords a Leaping, Nine Ladies Dancing, Eight Maids a Milking, Seven Swans a Swimming, Six Geese a Laying, Five Golden Rings, Four Calling Birds, Three French Hens, Two Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a Pear Tree.

****Now turn over to see what it really means****

This song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," is an English Christmas carol. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this Carol as a Catechism song for young Catholics (and not so young) to learn the tenets of their faith. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the Church. Each element in the Carol has a code word for a religious reality which children could remember. Thus:

1. The, "True Love," one hears in the song is not a smitten boy or girlfriend but God, the giver of all gifts, who in the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas gives us the One who bears all the other gifts showered on humanity, Jesus Christ. The, "Me," is every Baptised Christian who is showered with gifts in order to sing the song and proclaim the generosity of God. The, "Partridge," in the, "Pear Tree," is Jesus (with referenc to the Cross) because that bird is willing to sacrifice its life if necessary to protect its young by feigning injury to draw away predators.
2. The, "Two Turtle Doves," are the Old and New Testaments.
3. The, "Three French Hens," stand for the three theological virtues: Faith, Hope and Love.
4. The, "Four Calling Birds," are the Four Gospels or Four Evangelists; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
5. The, "Five Gold Rings," represents the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch or Torah), which describe man's fall into sin and the great love of God in His plan to save His people.
6. The, "Six Geese a Laying," stands for the six days of creation.
7. The, "Seven Swans a Swimming," represent the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge of God, Piety and Fear of the Lord and/or The Seven Sacraments; Baptism, Reconciliation, the Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Sacrament of the Sick.
8. The, Eight Maids a Milking," are the eight Beatitudes: *Blessed are...the poor in spirit; ...they who mourn; ...the meek; ...they who hunger and thirst for righteousness; ...the merciful; the pure in heart; ...the peacemakers; ...they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness.*
9. The, "Nine Ladies Dancing," (this is a really clever one). The "Fruit of the Spirit," is named in Galatians 5²² - 23^a: *love, joy, peace, patience (modesty), kindness (generosity), goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self – control (chastity).* Nine in all; but why "ladies?" Because all these nouns in Greek are feminine nouns. (Note: the tradition of the Church lists twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit; add those in parentheses). To fit the number scheme, for the Fruits of the Holy Spirit, the originator probably combined 6 to make 3, taking the 6 fruits that were similar: the fruit in each parenthesis is the one that was not named separately.
10. The, "The Ten Lords a Leaping," are the Ten Commandments. i) Thou shall have no other gods before me; ii) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; iii) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; iv) Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy; v) Honour thy father and mother; vi) Thou shalt not kill; vii) Thou shalt not commit adultery; viii) Thou shalt not steal; ix) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour and; x) Thou shalt not covet
11. The, "Eleven Lords a Leaping," stand for the eleven faithful apostles who piped the Gospel of Jesus to the whole world: Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas (or Jude) the son of James
12. The, "Twelve Drummers Drumming," are the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles Creed: i) I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth; ii) I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; iii) He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary; iv) He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; v) He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose again; vi) He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; vii) He will come again to judge the living and the dead; viii) I believe in the Holy Spirit; ix) the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints; x) the forgiveness of sins; xi) the resurrection of the body and; xii) life everlasting.

All the presents you'll ever need for Christmas and the New Year!