

"The Twelve Days of Christmas"

The songs gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of the faith. The "true love" mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person. The partridge in the Pear Tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, such in memory of the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem:

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered thee under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but thou wouldst not have it so..."

The other symbols mean the following:

2 Turtle Doves – the Old and New Testament

3 French Hens – Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues

4 Calling Birds – the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists

5 Golden Rings – the first five books of the Old Testament "Pentateuch", which gives the history of man's fall from grace

6 Geese A-laying – the six days of creation

7 Swans A-swimming the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the seven sacraments

8 Maids A-milking - the eight beatitudes

9 Ladies Dancing – the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit

10 Lords A-leaping – the Ten Commandments

11 Pipers Piping – the eleven faithful apostles

12 Drummers Drumming – the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

Fr. Hal Stockert