

The 12 Days of Christmas Gifts

This has been a hit with my Jr. High youth group. The kids enjoy opening a new gift each day, and I like that it is helping them learn more about Christmas.

I printed the following sheets out on card stock and cut into 4ths. I wrapped each gift with the card. If you have a large youth group, this will require a lot of work. I wrapped 60 of each and it took a couple of weeks to complete the wrapping process. If you have some great volunteers or older kids wanting service hours, this could be a great project for them.

Print the labels (last page) on the standard address label sheets (30 per page) to put on the wrapped gifts. It helps to only wrap one day at a time and label right away. I also kept each day in separate boxes and marked them by day. It made it easier to fill the gift bags.

The next page is a list of suggested gifts for each day. I tried to keep the gifts inexpensive, small, and fun. It took a lot of thinking and searching for the items, but most came from Oriental Trading Company. Amazon and CTAinc.com. Autom.com also has some great ideas. Check clearance sales and after Christmas Sales. Last year I started in January and gathered items throughout the year.

For the gift bag, I bought white craft paper bags to put each set of gifts in. I printed out, cut in half, and glued the “Card” to the outside of the paper bag. The “Card” is on the 2nd to last page in this pdf. Be sure to add who the gift is from under the “Merry Christmas”.

Day 1 Partridge in a Pear tree: Baby Jesus ornament, Holy Family ornament, or resin Baby Jesus

Day 2 Two Turtle Doves: Dove pin, 2 Dove chocolates, dove ornament

Day 3 Three French Hens: Faith Hope and Charity (or Love) necklace or bracelet. I found metal washers on Amazon and put them on a rope chain. I also found silicone bands with the words on them.

Day 4 Four Calling Birds: Bird suckers, or Bird whistles. I found both at OTC

Day 5 Five Golden Rings: Gold silicone bracelets, Gold paracord bracelets (I made them myself to cut costs)

Day 6 Six Geese A-Laying: I found some really great pocket calendars with inspirational sayings from OTC

Day 7 Seven Swans a Swimming: Same as #2

Day 8 Eight Maids A-Milking: I found “the Beatitudes” prayer cards on Autom.com and a kindness coin on OTC

Day 9 Nine Ladies Dancing: Fruit snacks (I put 2 in each)

Day 10 Ten Lords A-Leaping: Prayer Stones or stones with Bible verses, Pen or Pencil, writing tablet

Day 11 Eleven Pipers Piping: This was a little more challenging. Saint cards or bookmarks have been my go-to

Day 12 Twelve Drummers Drumming: Clacker, Apostles Creed bookmark, book/pamphlet about the life of an Apostle



On the 1st Day of Christmas
my True Love gave to
me.....

A Partridge in a Pear Tree!

The "12 Days of Christmas" song 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 a 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, much 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..."



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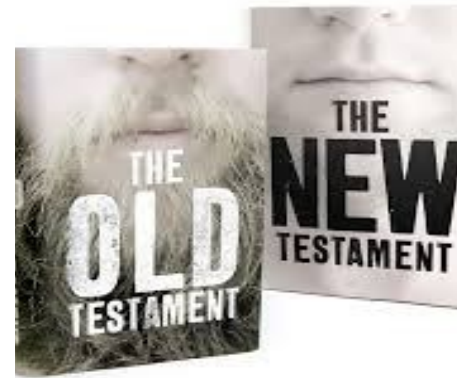


On the 2nd Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Two Turtle Doves!



Two turtle doves represent the Old and New Testaments. Also, Jewish couples of modest income offered two turtle doves instead of the customary lamb as a sacrifice to God when they presented their newborn child in the Temple. Interestingly, our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph offered a sacrifice of two turtle doves for the presentation of our Lord (cf. Luke 2:22-24).



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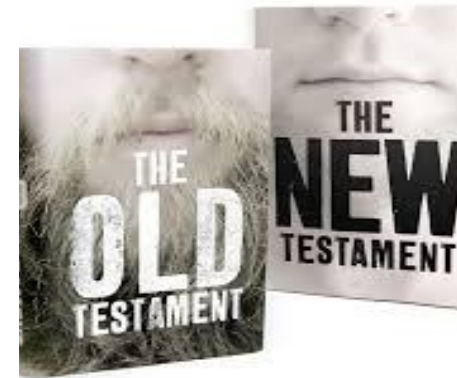


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On the 3rd Day of Christmas my
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Three French Hens

Known for their beauty and rarity, the **three French hens** signify both the gifts of the Magi (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), and the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.



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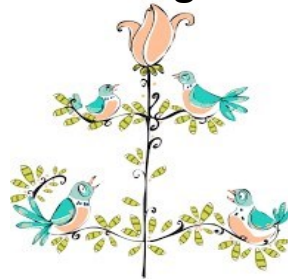
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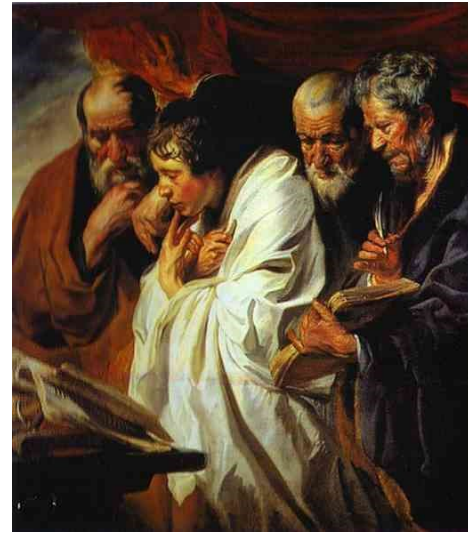


On the 4th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Four Calling Birds



The **four calling birds** are associated with both the four evangelists and their gospels— Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and the four major prophets— Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.



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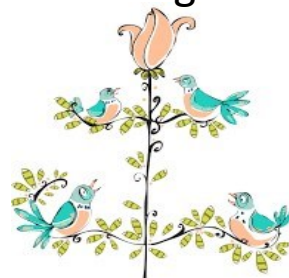


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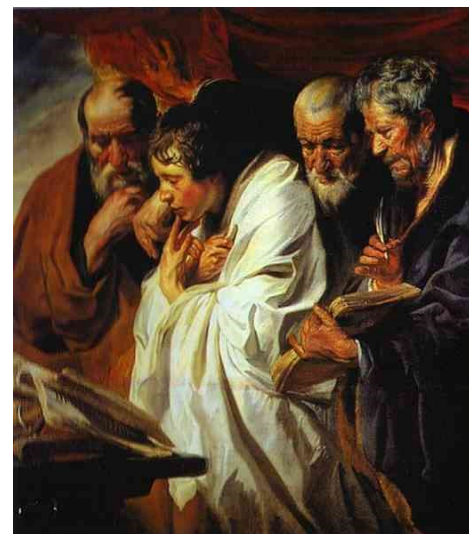


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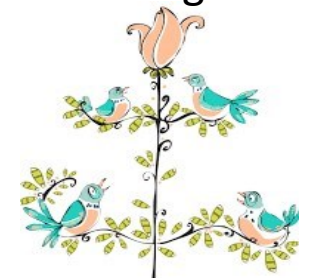


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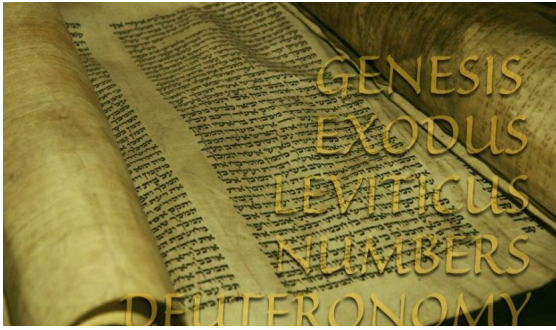


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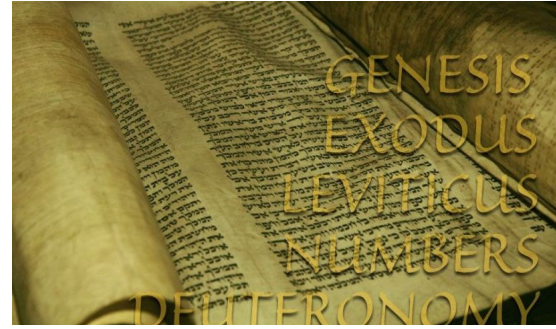


On the 5th Day of
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Love gave to
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FIVE Golden rings!



Five golden rings has a two-fold significance. A ring, or a circle, has no beginning or end but is continuous. Thereby, the ring reminds us of both God's eternity— His permanent, faithful, and continuous love for us— and the circle of faith— God's love for us, our love for Him, and our love for our neighbors. The number five also signifies the first five books of the Old Testament

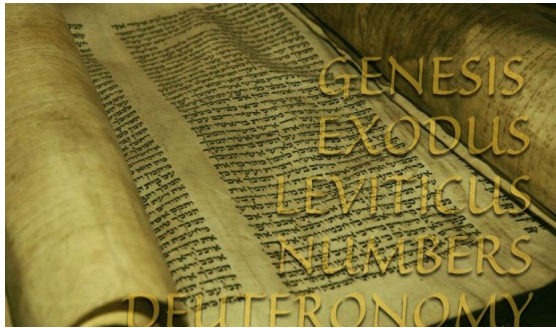


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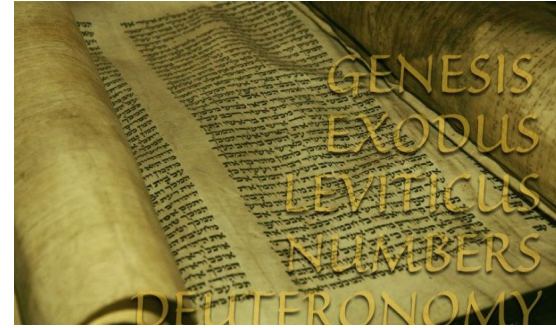


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On the 6th Day of
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Six Geese a-Laying



The six Geese a-Laying symbolizes the six days of creation recounted in Genesis. God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.



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Seven Swans
a-Swimming

The **seven swans a-swimming** continues the Genesis theme, reminding us that God's plan included not just the six days of creating but also the seventh day of rest; we in turn must not forget to make Sunday a holy day by worshiping God at Mass, spending time with our loved ones, and relaxing. Moreover, the seven swans a-swimming refers to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven corporal works of mercy, the seven spiritual works of mercy, and the seven deadly sins.



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³“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
⁴Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
⁵Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
⁷Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
⁸Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
⁹Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.
¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

On the 8th Day of
Christmas my True
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Eight Maids
a-Milking

The **eight maids a-milking** signifies the eight beatitudes and, at that time in our Church, the eight times during the year prescribed for the faithful to receive Holy Communion.

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The Fruit of God's Spirit



On the 9th Day of Christmas my True Love gave to me.....

Nine Ladies Dancing

The Nine Ladies Dancing represents the Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. – Galatians 5:22-31.

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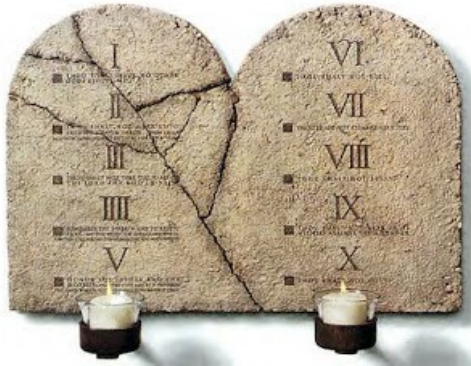
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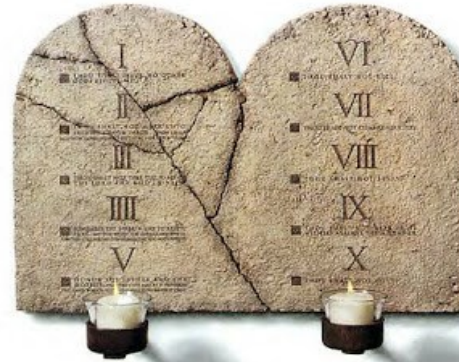


On the 10th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to
me.....

Ten Lords a-Leaping

The Ten Lords a-Leaping represent the 10 Commandments:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have any strange gods before me. | 6. Thou shalt not commit adultery. |
| 2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. | 7. Thou shalt not steal. |
| 3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day. | 8. Thou shalt no bear false witness against thy neighbor. |
| 4. Honor thy father and mother. | 9. Thou shalt not covet they neighbor's wife. |
| 5. Thou shalt not kill. | 10. Thou shalt not covet they neighbor's goods. |



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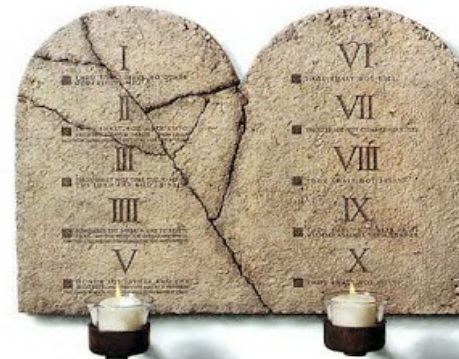


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On the 11th Day
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True Love gave
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Eleven Pipers
Piping

Eleven pipers piping are the eleven faithful apostles at the time of the resurrection and ascension. (Remember that Judas, one of the Twelve, betrayed our Lord and committed suicide.)



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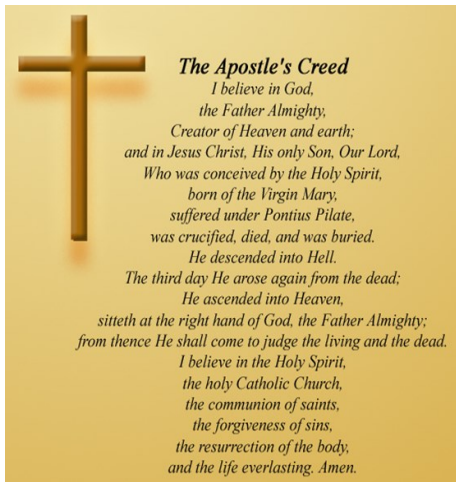
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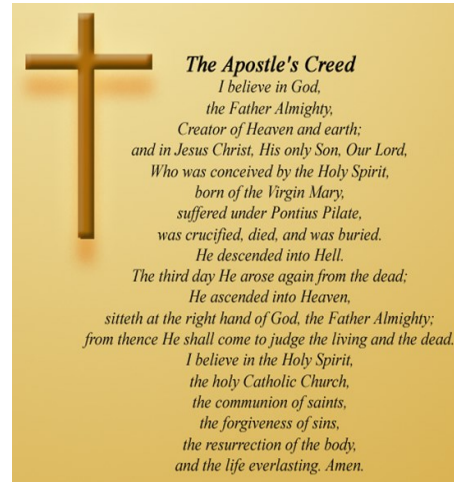
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Twelve Drummers
Drumming

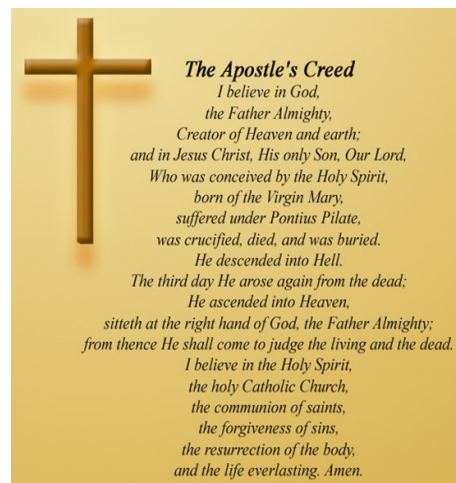
The **twelve drummers drumming** are the twelve minor prophets, the twelve precepts of the Apostles Creed (still the structure of the first part of the *Catechism*), the twelve apostles (particularly the original 11 plus St. Matthias who replaced Judas), and the twelve tribes of Israel.



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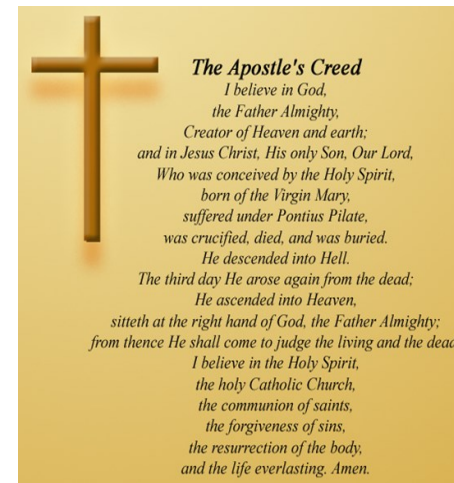
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Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Twelve Drummers
Drumming

The **twelve drummers drumming** are the twelve minor prophets, the twelve precepts of the Apostles Creed (still the structure of the first part of the *Catechism*), the twelve apostles (particularly the original 11 plus St. Matthias who replaced Judas), and the twelve tribes of Israel.



On the 1st Day of Christmas
my True Love gave to
me.....

A Partridge in a Pear Tree!

The "12 Days of Christmas" song 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 a 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, much 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..."



On the 3rd Day of Christmas my
True Love gave to me.....

Three French Hens

Known for their beauty and rarity, the **three French hens** signify both the gifts of the Magi (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), and the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.



Two turtle doves represent the Old and New Testaments. Also, Jewish couples of modest income offered two turtle doves instead of the customary lamb as a sacrifice to God when they presented their newborn child in the Temple. Interestingly, our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph offered a sacrifice of two turtle doves for the presentation of our Lord (cf. Luke 2:22-24).

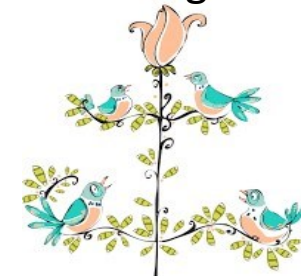
On the 2nd Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Two Turtle Doves!

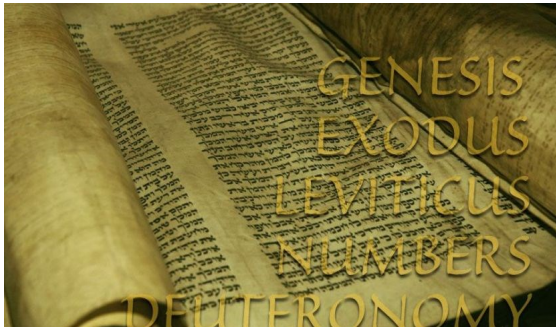


On the 4th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Four Calling Birds



The **four calling birds** are associated with both the four evangelists and their gospels— Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and the four major prophets— Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.



On the 5th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to
me.....

FIVE Golden rings!



Five golden rings has a two-fold significance. A ring, or a circle, has no beginning or end but is continuous. Thereby, the ring reminds us of both God's eternity— His permanent, faithful, and continuous love for us— and the circle of faith— God's love for us, our love for Him, and our love for our neighbors. The number five also signifies the first five books of the Old Testament



On the 6th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Six Geese a-Laying



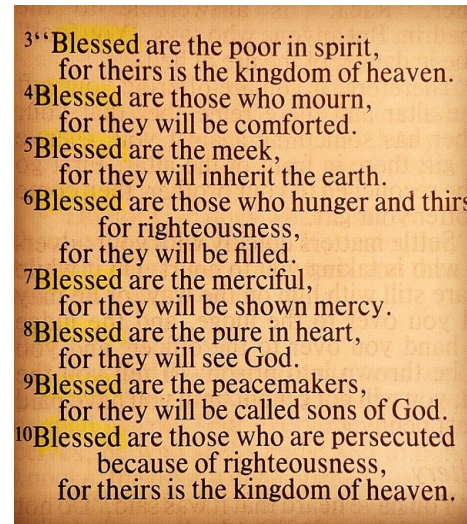
The six Geese a-Laying symbolizes the six days of creation recounted in Genesis. God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.



On the 7th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Seven Swans
a-Swimming

The **seven swans a-swimming** continues the Genesis theme, reminding us that God's plan included not just the six days of creating but also the seventh day of rest; we in turn must not forget to make Sunday a holy day by worshiping God at Mass, spending time with our loved ones, and relaxing. Moreover, the seven swans a-swimming refers to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven corporal works of mercy, the seven spiritual works of mercy, and the seven deadly sins.



On the 8th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Eight Maids
a-Milking

The **eight maids a-milking** signifies the eight beatitudes and, at that time in our Church, the eight times during the year prescribed for the faithful to receive Holy Communion.

The Fruit of God's Spirit



On the 9th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Nine Ladies Dancing

The Nine Ladies Dancing represents the Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. – Galatians 5:22-31.



On the 10th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to
me.....

Ten Lords a-Leaping

The Ten Lords a-Leaping represent the 10 Commandments:

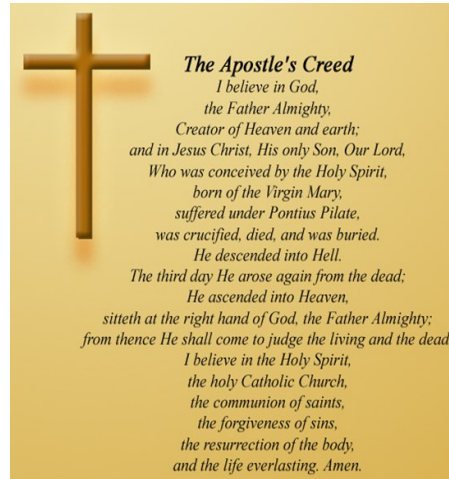
1. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have any strange gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt no bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet they neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet they neighbor's goods.



On the 11th Day
of Christmas my
True Love gave
to me.....

Eleven Pipers
Piping

Eleven pipers piping are the eleven faithful apostles at the time of the resurrection and ascension. (Remember that Judas, one of the Twelve, betrayed our Lord and committed suicide.)



On the 12th Day of
Christmas my True
Love gave to me.....

Twelve Drummers
Drumming

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Merry Christmas!

Please enjoy

*the Twelve Days
of Christmas*

But remember to
only open the gift
marked for each
day!



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DO NOT OPEN UNTIL
December 25th

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