

From This Corner  
**The Voices and Music of the Season**  
Larry Baird

Over the years we begin to associate certain voices with Christmas. These voices are often those of the vocalists who bring us the music of the season. These voices for me were those heard on my father's record collections. Call me nostalgic, but I think that many of the newer vocal artists cannot hold a candle to those singers when it comes to Christmas music.

For several years I have tried to collect Christmas music to replace my old 33 1/3 records. Inevitably I was disappointed by most of the contemporary artists. The titles of the song were familiar but the renditions were so altered by the contemporary musical genre that many of them didn't even "sound" like Christmas. "O Holy Night" done to rap somehow rubs me the wrong way.

Last year I happened on a gold mine. The first find was a CD version of the original Gene Autry "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," a recording straight from my childhood. It includes the cowboy's rendition of the "Story of the Nativity." Now that was real Christmas music! The other finds were "Christmas Crooners" featuring Tony Martin, Eddie Fisher, Vic Damone, and Eddy Arnold. Another was "Christmas with Nat, Dean, and Bing." Just to show I am not completely out of it, Celine Dion is just fine. She has an angel's voice if ever the world has heard one. Chicago also has a great Christmas collection that I am convinced makes Gabriel himself turn green with envy.

Whatever your musical tastes, I think you would have to agree that Christmas would be impoverished without these voices and their music. Without the voices of Christmas there would be a gigantic void. It would be hard to imagine Christmas without them.

A far bigger void, however, would be noticed had not God's voice been heard. Without God's voice there would be no Christmas at all. On the first day of Christmas God's voice became flesh. As the gospel according to John says, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." (John 1: 14 NRSV)

May you enjoy the music of the season, and may God's voice once again sing you a love song called "Jesus."