

THE HURON CAROL, by St. Jean Brebeuf (1593-1649)

Jean Brebeuf was a French Jesuit priest, who was assigned to convert the Native American Huron tribe to Christianity. The Hurons occupied territory around Lake Huron, in what is now Ontario, Canada.

He arrived in North America in 1625 and had limited success in converting some Hurons. He learned their language, made a Huron dictionary, and wrote songs to assist his ministry.

In 1649 the fort of Saint Louis was attacked and destroyed by the Iroquois tribe. Brebeuf and another priest, Gabriel Lalemant, were captured and tortured to death by the Iroquois.

Jean Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalemant were canonized by the Catholic church in 1930.

The lyrics of the Huron Carol, written by Brebeuf and as translated by George Middleton, are:

'Twas in the moon of winter time when all the birds had fled,
The Mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim and wandering hunters heard the hymn
Jesus your king is born, Jesus is born.
In excelsis Gloria.

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round.
But as the hunter braves drew nigh the angel song rang loud and high,
Jesus your king is born, Jesus is born.
In excelsis Gloria.

The earliest moon of winter time is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before Him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt
Jesus your king is born, Jesus is born.
In excelsis Gloria.

Oh children of the forest free oh sons of Manitou
The Holy child of heaven and earth is born this day for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy who brings you beauty peace and joy.
Jesus your king is born, Jesus is born.
In excelsis Gloria.

This arrangement for saxophone quartet is adapted from a choral arrangement by Michael J. Oczko (1953-2010), a Canadian composer who later moved to Poland.

Bruce Evans, 2023

Soprano Sax

THE HURON CAROL

"Twas in the moon of wintertime"

St. Jean de Brebeuf

Arr. Michael J. Oczko

Adapted for Sax Quartet by Bruce Evans

The musical score is written for Soprano Saxophone in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music, numbered 1 through 35. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and slurs. Dynamic markings are placed throughout: *p* (piano) at measures 3, 23, and 33; *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measures 13 and 27; and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 33. The piece concludes with a fermata over the final note in measure 35. The score is adapted for a Sax Quartet.

Alto Sax

THE HURON CAROL

"Twas in the moon of wintertime"

St. Jean de Brebeuf

Arr. Michael J. Oczko

Adapted for Sax Quartet by Bruce Evans

The musical score is written for Alto Saxophone in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The piece is in 4/4 time, with some sections in 2/4 time. The score consists of seven staves of music, numbered 1 through 35. The dynamics are marked as follows: *p* (piano) at measures 1, 23, and 31; *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measures 13, 17, and 27; and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 33. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and rests. The piece concludes with a final note on measure 35.

Tenor Sax

THE HURON CAROL

"Twas in the moon of wintertime"

St. Jean de Brebeuf

Arr. Michael J. Oczko

Adapted for Sax Quartet by Bruce Evans

The musical score is written for Tenor Sax in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music, numbered 1 through 35. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The dynamics are marked as *p* (piano) at measure 1, *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measures 13 and 26, and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 33. There are also rests and a fermata at the end of the piece. The score is adapted for a sax quartet.

Baritone Sax

THE HURON CAROL

"Twas in the moon of wintertime"

St. Jean de Brebeuf

Arr. Michael J. Oczko

Adapted for Sax Quartet by Bruce Evans

The musical score is written for Baritone Sax in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The piece is in 4/4 time and consists of 35 measures. The score is divided into six systems, each containing a single staff. Measure numbers 1 through 35 are indicated below the notes. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) at measure 1, *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measures 13 and 27, *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measures 17, 21, and 33, and *f* (forte) at measure 27. The score features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several slurs and phrasing marks throughout the piece. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 35.

Alto Sax 1 for Soprano

THE HURON CAROL

"'Twas in the moon of wintertime"

St. Jean de Brebeuf

Arr. Michael J. Oczko

Adapted for Sax Quartet by Bruce Evans

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It consists of 35 measures across seven staves. The time signature is 4/4 for measures 1-10 and 13-15, and 2/4 for measures 11-12, 16-17, 21-22, 25-26, and 31-32. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) at measures 3, 23, and 33; *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measures 13 and 27; and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 33. The score features various articulations such as slurs, accents, and breath marks. The piece concludes with a final fermata on a whole note in measure 35.