

The Ballad of the Cross
Theodosia Garrison(1874-1944)
Folk tune.

Melchior, Gaspar, Balthazar,
Great gifts they bore and meet;
White linen for His body fair
And purple for His feet;
And golden things the joy of kings
And myrrh to breathe Him sweet.

It was the shepherd Terish spake,
"Oh, poor the gift I bring
A little cross of broken twigs,
A hind's gift to a king
Yet, haply, He may smile to see
And know my offering."

And it was Mary held her Son
Full softly to her breast,
"Great gifts and sweet are at Thy feet
And wonders king-possessed;
O little Son, take Thou the one
That pleasures Thee the best."

It was the Christ-Child in her arms
Who turned from gaud and gold,
Who turned from wondrous gifts and great,
From purple woof and fold,
And to His breast the cross He pressed
That scarce His hands could hold.

'Twas king and shepherd went their way
Great wonder tore their bliss;
'Twas Mary clasped her little Son
Close, close to feel her kiss,
And in His hold the cross lay cold
Between her heart and His!