part three

The Joy of Mary
Fig. 7.—The Virgin and Child Enthroned. Second of four miniatures preceding the Amesbury Abbey Psalter, Oxford, All Souls College MS 6, fol. 4. The miniature illustrates the relationship of mankind in present time to Mary, and to Christ seen through Mary, in the joy of heaven. For more extended discussion, refer to the Notes to Illustrations.
We ought at all times to praise and honour Mary, and with all devotion to meditate on her sweetness; but to-day, on the feast of her Assumption, we should especially rejoice with her, for to-day was her joy made full. Great was her joy when the angel saluted her. Great was her joy when she experienced the coming of the Holy Ghost, and that wonderful union took place within her womb between the Son of God and her flesh, so that He who was the Son of God became her Son also. Great was her joy when she held that Son within her arms, kissed Him, ministered unto Him; and when she heard His discourses, and beheld His miracles. And because she had been greatly saddened in His passion, she had marvellous joy in His resurrection, and still more in His ascension. But all these joys were surpassed by the joy which she received to-day.¹

¹ We have studied poems in which, through the medium of Mary, the medieval religious poet conceived two of the focal points of sacred history, the birth of Christ and His death and resurrection. We have seen how in the joy Mary felt at Christ's birth were the seeds of her sorrow at His suffering and death, and how the sorrow was transfigured by Christ's resurrection into a final joy which her first joy had foreshadowed. The last event of Mary's life on earth to be celebrated in the yearly cycle of the liturgy was the assumption, the event which brought Mary into the joy of heaven. The other
joyful events of her life, the annunciation, Christ’s birth, His resurrection after His death, and His ascension, were seen in relation to this final destiny of Mary. It is on the occasion of this feast that St. Aelred, with his words above, urges his congregation especially to rejoice.2

Christ came through Mary. Through Christ’s passion and death which redeemed man and in virtue of her motherhood of Christ and her spiritual suffering at His death, Mary became the spiritual mother of mankind. Yet at the same time Mary was herself a human being whose joy, like all man’s, was to be defined by the degree of closeness of her union with God. Because through the Incarnation Christ took Mary’s flesh and she became His mother, Mary shared a closer bond with Him than any other creature.3 All her beauty and joy as described by the medieval poet came from this relationship. Her maiden motherhood, the source of her title “maiden mak- eles,” was the effect and the sign of her special union. Of Mary’s spiritual suffering during Christ’s passion, the deepest was caused by being separated from her Son at His death. At His resurrection her joy was restored to an even stronger degree than her first joy experienced at His birth. At His ascension into glory, while Mary remained on earth physically separated from Christ, as man remains now, she was spiritually joined to Christ by the memories of their life, and she lived in loving expectation of her own entry into heaven.4 At her death, through her assumption by Christ into heaven, she was reunited bodily and spiritually into the full glory of her Son. This union in present time with Christ in majesty is the basis of her title, Queen of Heaven.

A sermon on Mary’s five joys to be found in John Mirk’s Festial describes the meaning of this joyful queenship:

The v. joye was yn hur assumpcyon, when scho segh hur swete sonne come wyth gret multitude of angelys and sayntys, and fache hur ynto Heuen, and crowned hur qwene of Heuen, and emperess of hell, and lady of all þe world. Syþen all þat ben yn Heuen, schull do hur reuerens and worschyp; and þos þat ben yn hell, schall be buxom to hur byddyng; and þos þat byn yn erthe, schall do hur seruyce and gretzyng.5

A sermon in the Festial for the Feast of the Assumption presents the perfection of her queenship in detail:
And soo crist set hur þer by hym yn his trone, and crowned hur qwene of Heuen, and emperice of hell, and lady of al þe worlde, and hath a hygh ioy passyng all þe sayntys. And as þe sonne leghtenyth al þe day, ryght soo scho lyghtenyth al þe cowrt of Heuen. And al þat byn yn Heuyn byn buxom to hur and redy at hur commaundement, and don hur worschyp in honowre, as þay owyn forto do to hor Lordis modyr and hor qwene; and ys þer of on wyll and one loue wyth þe holy Trinite þat grauntyth hur what þat euer scho askyth, and at hur prayer rewardyth all hur servantes. And þus scho sittyþe yn Heuen next to þe Trinite, wyth body gloryfyet, and ys yn full certeyne þat þes ioyes schuld dure for euermor. Þus was þis assumpyon don ioyfully.

Hit was don alsoo holy, þat is, yn body and yn soule puttyng away the comyn condicion of monkynd, þat ys, forto dey; and so þe body turnyd ynto corupcyon and stynkyng careyne. But for encheson þat Crist toke flesch and blode of oure ladyys body, and so were on flesch and on body, þerfor scho was outtakyn of þat condicion, and was fat ynto Heuen yn body and yn soule.⁶

Mary, the first human being after Christ to have entered heaven, is both the pledge and type of man’s own future resurrection and glory. As she was the gate through which God came to earth, so now after her assumption, because of her closeness to God, Mary becomes the gate through which humanity will be reunited to God. As Queen of Heaven she becomes intercessor for man. Her role is the full fruit of the pain she suffered at the crucifixion which made her the mother of man, and it provides the basis of the title given her by the medieval poet: “milsful moder,” or Mother of Mercy.⁷

In the religious lyrics we have considered it is Mary’s assumption that has defined the present relationship of the poet and his audience to her. The direct appeal to Mary in the petition of the poems has been made with the recognition that she is now Queen of Heaven. When we come to the many English poems which celebrate the five joys of Mary, we find this state of Mary in heaven is the subject. These poems have a double movement which is established by the context of the poet and his audience in sacred history: they look back upon the joyful events in Mary’s life from the present perspective of Mary as Queen of Heaven; while at the same time, by enumerating the joys of her life on earth, they define the aspects of Mary’s
heavenly joy. Mary's heavenly joy is the fulfillment of her earthly joys and the definition of man's future joy.

The devotion of the five joys of Mary—the annunciation and the birth of Christ, His resurrection, His ascension, and Mary's assumption into heaven—was popular in England by the time the first poems appeared in the English tongue after the Conquest, and it continued to be so through the fifteenth century. In his *Auteurs spirituels et textes devots du moyen âge latin*, Dom A. Wilmart gives evidence that although the number of Mary's joys celebrated varied widely, in England the tradition of five was the most common.\(^8\) *The Index of Middle English Verse* lists nineteen extant poems on the subject from this period.\(^9\) Developing from popular devotional life rather than from the official liturgy of the Church, the joys of Mary are to be found in various places and take different forms. The devotion was often included in the *Horae* or Prymers. In the *Horae Eboracenses*, for example, the Latin book of the Hours of the Virgin Mary according to the use of York, we find after Compline two hymns, each followed by a verse and response and a prayer on the theme of the hymn.\(^10\) The first, "Gavde virgo, mater Christi," according to the heading above it, "De gaudijs beate Marie virginis corporali­bus," is about the five joys Mary experienced during her life on earth. Corresponding to the devotion of Mary's earthly joys, the second hymn, "Gavde flore virginali," is about "Alia gaudia beatissime Marie virginis spiritualia." The seven heavenly joys it celebrates are the same as those above in the *Festial* sermon.\(^11\) There are also many examples of the five joys depicted in the illuminations of the Psalters and the *Horae* of the period.\(^12\)

As early as the twelfth century there were legends of special graces granted and miracles performed by Mary for those who honored her five joys.\(^13\) A correspondence between the five joys and the five wounds of Christ was often made. In *Our Lady's Dowry*, T. E. Bridgett gives a picturesque example of this from two wills. One provided that at the Mass and Dirge there be five men dressed in black, standing for the five wounds of Christ, and five women in white, signifying Mary's five joys; and the other, that at every holy day during divine services five candles be burned on the deadman's grave for Christ's wounds and five for Mary's joys.\(^14\) Besides corresponding in number to Christ's wounds, Mary's five joys were seen to correspond to the five letters of her name. We find an example of this in the thirteenth century *Ancrene Riwle*, where a devotion of the five joys follows a similarly organized devotion of the cross. The devotion of the joys is a combination of meditation, recitation of psalms, and a litany-like petition. It
THE JOY OF MARY consists first of a prayer meditation on the joy, next an antiphon of part of the angelic salutation, "Ave Maria gratia plena dominus tecum," which is followed in turn by a canticle or psalm. The first joy's canticle is the Magnificat, the rest of the joys having psalms whose first letters, with that of the Magnificat, spell in order M-A-R-I-A. Finally, after each psalm the whole Ave Maria is to be repeated five times. Concluding his description, the author of the devotion points out, "The psalms are chosen so that their first letters are those of Our Lady's name, as you may notice, and the prayer about her five greatest joys runs in fives. If you count the greetings in the antiphons, you will find five in each." 15

The origin of the devotion is obscure. The earliest known example in the English tongue is the description given in the Riule. In his Appendix to M. B. Salu's translation of the Riule, Dom Gerard Sitwell traces the concept behind the devotion to the eleventh century antiphon: "Gaude Dei genetrix, virgo immaculata: gaude quod gaudium ab angelo suscepisti: gaude quod genuisti eterni luminis claritatem, gaude mater, gaude sancte Dei genetrix. Virgo tu sola innupta. Te laudet omnis filii creatura genetricem lucis: sis pro nobis pia interventrix." 16 He indicates this antiphon was connected to the five joys in twelfth century anecdotes about the beneficial results of the devotion. Dom Wilmart suggests the same source, 17 while Natalie White proposes an antiphon used in almost every feast of Mary: "Gaude Maria virgo: cunctas hereses sola interemisti in universo mundo." 18 The earliest example of the poetic development of the devotion seems to be the eleventh century Latin hymn, "Gavde virgo, mater Christi," which was included in the York Horae. This is the source of the first Middle English poems we shall consider on Mary's joy.
Glade us maiden, moder milde,
þurru þin herre þu were wid childe—
  Gabriel he seide it þe—
Glade us, ful of gode þine,
þam þu bere buten pine
  wid þe, lilie of chastete.

Glade us of iesu þi sone
þat þolede deit for monis loue;
  þat dehit was, quiic up aros.
Glade us maiden, crist up stey
& in heuene þe i-sey;
  He bar him seluen into is clos.

Glade us marie, to Ioye ibrout,—
Muche wrchipe crist hau þe i-worut—
  in heuene brit in þi paleis;
Þer þat frut of þire wombe
Be i-yefin us forto fonden
  in Ioye þat is endeles.
Gaudete virgo, mater Christi,
    que per aurem concepi
         Gabriele nuncio.

Gaude quia Deo plena,
    peperisti sine pena
         cum pudoris lilio.

Gaude quia tui nati,
    quem dolebas mortem pati,
         fulget resurrectio.

Gaude Christo ascendente,
    quod in celum, te vidente,
         motu fertur proprio.

Gaude quod post ipsum scandis,
    et est honor tibi grandis
         in celi palatio.

Vbi fructus ventris tui
    per te detur nobis frui:
         in perenni gaudio.
THE NAMES OF JOY: ‘GLADE US MAIDEN, MODER MILDE’

The other poems we have studied have been formulated from the perspective of sacred history; that is, they have been a meditation on a past event—the annunciation or the death of Christ—as seen from the point of view of the present in which the poem was conceived. The meditation was then applied to the present as a way of future fulfillment. This was evident especially in “Gabriel, fram evene-king,” “Pe milde Lomb isprad o rode,” and “Stond wel, moder, vnder rode.” In “Wy haue ʒe no reuthe on my child?” and “Suete sone, reu on me,” the context of the present was not explicitly mentioned in the poem, yet the full meaning and the structure became clear only in relationship to the present as it was defined by sacred history. Using his present knowledge of the meaning of the crucifixion and his own union with it, the listener responded to the meditation as if it were a definition of the present. Those who wound Christ, the poet implied, are those who sin; those who have compassion on Him are those who turn to Him with love and refrain from sin.

When we consider the poems which have as their subject Mary’s joy, we find, however, that the fundamental principle of proportion and perspective is modified. The nature of the relationship which the poet and his audience have to Mary in the present becomes the source of movement in the poem. This relationship is defined by sacred history. The explicit point of view of a poem on the joys is the present time. The dynamic basis of movement in the poem is the difference between the quality of the present in which mankind is and the quality of the present in which Mary is. There is a double
discrepancy between the two presents, one of grace and, paradoxically, one of time. Both the poet and his audience and Mary occupy the same temporal place in the sequence of events of sacred history, but in terms of state man is separated from Mary in the same way he is separated from heaven. Theology defines the distance. Two facts, both of history, separate man from heaven. The first is that man is in a state of sin and imperfection which only time and grace have the power to remedy. His state is partly a consequence of the second and original cause of separation, the fall of man through the sin of Adam and the fact that the redemption of man still awaits its consummation in the future second coming of Christ. The future event will eternally fix man’s relationship to heaven, when time will take the form of the eternal separation from or eternal union with God. Thus man in the present time lives in relation to heaven, much as Mary lived after Christ’s ascension, in a tension of love and hope. Mary, because of her sinlessness and because at her death she was assumed by Christ into heaven, is in a state which corresponds to the state man desires to be in. The first human to enter heaven bodily after Christ, besides being man’s intercessor, she is the means of defining man’s future joy.

In “Glade us maiden, moder milde” the poet addresses Mary as she is now, having been assumed into heaven, from his own present imperfect state of sadness and joy. He speaks to her across the gap, not of space, but of state and time. By recalling and defining the five joys which led Mary into the joy of heaven, it is his purpose to secure for himself and for his audience the perfection of the joy of Mary, and the poet’s words themselves, by reaching across the gap to Mary, become a means to joy. To describe the separate causes of Mary’s joy on earth, the poet uses the sequence of time, those past events of Mary’s life which have led to her present joy in heaven. To describe her state in heaven, the poet uses the figure of place. The poet and his audience are “here” on earth; Mary rejoices “there” in heaven. Because Mary’s joyful state in heaven is her full union with Christ, the aspect of joy in each event recalled consists of an aspect of her union with Christ. First, at His conception and His birth, there is Mary’s joy in her maiden motherhood of Christ; then at His resurrection, there is her joy in the redemption of man and in Christ’s own release from pain; and at His ascension, her joy in seeing Him enter glory; finally, at her assumption, there is Mary’s ultimate joy in her own union with Christ in heaven. Because the poet defines the past joys of Mary’s life in light of Mary’s eternal present in heaven in order to address her, his words transform the events into timeless
names of Mary. Furthermore, the poet distinguishes the individual joys from each other and orders them proportionately, a fact which will become clearer as we consider how the method of the Middle English poet differs from that used by the poet of his Latin source.

The thirteenth century “Glade us maiden, moder milde” is a close translation of the eleventh century hymn “Gavde virgo, mater Christi,” the first known example of the devotion of Mary’s five joys. According to Brown, in the manuscript the Latin text alternates stanza by stanza with the English verses. Although Brown says that the rhyme scheme of the English follows that of the Latin original, when we compare Brown’s edition to the York Latin version of the poem, we see a significant difference. The Latin poem is in six three-line stanzas, and the whole of the Latin develops as a single unit. This development is reflected in the fact that throughout the poem the third line of each of the six stanzas is identically rhymed (aab, ccb, ddb, etc.). On the other hand, the English poet has grouped his stanzas into three units of six lines, each unit rhyming aabccb. This difference in the stanza grouping of the English version is one of several variations made by the English poet which establish the particular proportions of his poem. So that we can see more clearly the purpose of the English version, I have included the York Latin text for comparison.

“Glade us maiden, moder milde,” the poet begins with the exhortation that introduces each of the joys, addressing Mary as she is in her present joy in heaven. “Gavde virgo, mater Christi,” the Latin begins. Already in the first line two important variations from the Latin version can be seen. The English poet has shifted the command which in the Latin tells Mary herself to rejoice, to apply to “us,” explicitly incorporating the joy of mankind into the poem. The English verb suggests two meanings. Let us rejoice, the command may mean, referring to the joy man feels contemplating the significance of the virgin motherhood of Mary. Or, Mary, make us glad, it may mean, the poet having in mind the petition and purpose of his poem to secure for man “Ioye þat is endeles.” For the Latin poem’s “Christi” the poet has substituted “milde,” minimizing the presence of Christ in the first stanza to focus entirely on Mary, and he has added to the title presenting the paradox of her maiden motherhood, a title suggesting her motherhood of man.

With line two the poet introduces a second paradox, “þurru þin herre þu were wid childe,” corresponding in the Latin to “que per aurem concepisti.” The poet has drawn a phrase from the liturgy, which as well as suggesting
Christ's nature as the Word, emphasizes by its paradoxical meaning the fact of Mary's virginity. (See Figure 3.) By words and phrasing the English conveys a physical concreteness to the expression of the mystery of Christ's conception, as after stating that Mary became with child through her ear, in a separate clause the poet adds, "Gabriel he seide it be," suggesting that the angel's words themselves were the cause of her conceiving. In the Latin stanza the conception which preserved Mary's virginity is described more with the play of wit than the physical literalness. We shall see later that the English poet deliberately uses this characteristic of concreteness to establish certain correspondences between the events he describes.

"Glade us, ful of gode hne," in the beginning of his second address, the poet echoes the angel's salutation to Mary as "full of grace." Substituting for the abstract word "grace" the proper name "gode," he introduces the theme of the second joy and proposes yet a third paradox to explain the first two. The child conceived was God. Mary, bodily carrying God, was literally "full of God." Being full of God is the basis of her second joy: first, that she should bear God in such an intimate way; second, in lines five and six, that in giving birth to God, Who was bodily present, she should suffer no pain. The insertion of the editorial comma by Brown makes interpretation of "wid be, lilie of chastete" difficult. The comma causes "lilie of chastete" to appear to be another title for Mary, corresponding to "moder milde." But the Latin helps us to clarify the poet's intention here: "peperisti sine pena/ cum pudoris lilio." You gave birth without pain, like the lily of chastity. "Wid be" can mean "like," so that "lilie of chastete" is not used as another epithet for Mary, but as a figure for comparison. The phrase means, Mary bore God without pain, in a birth that preserved her virginity; she is in this like the lily of chastity.

The fact that the poem is oriented in present time and condition and is an appeal to Mary is reflected in the language with which the poet has described these first two events which caused Mary's joy. Rather than recounting the joys by means of transitive verbs as happenings occurring by cause and effect, by casting them into descriptive phrases the poet has presented the events as if they were the attributes of Mary. In lines one through three the means and the effect of the angel's annunciation, "purru pin herre pu were wid childe," are given as the cause, and the actual cause is appended as a qualifying thought, "Gabriel he seide it be," so that the means and the effect are included not as part of the event, but as they show why the poet names Mary maiden and mother. In a similar way, in lines four through six the action of
the event is linked to the descriptive phrase “ful of gode þine” by a relative pronoun “þam,” which introduces in a descriptive clause, “þu bere buten pine,” followed in turn, in the sixth line, by another descriptive clause comparing the event to the quality of the lily. By minimizing the action of an event in order to define a state or quality of Mary, the poet achieves his double purpose, both to define Mary’s joys and at the same time by virtue of them to name Mary in present time.

The next stanza, repeating the appeal that Mary make us glad, contrasts to the first stanza in which the poet of the English version has made the motherhood of Mary the focus. It presents her next two joys by centering on Christ as His godhood is shown, first, after His death, in His resurrection, and then in His ascension into glory.

Glade us of iesu þi sone
þat bolede deit for monis loue;
þat dehit was, quiic up aros.

Make us glad in Jesus thy Son; or possibly, let us rejoice in Jesus thy Son. In the third joy, as in the first two, the poet formulates the events into a way of naming. Speaking of Jesus as Mary’s Son, he identifies Him further by two relative clauses, the tense holding the action of the events into a past time as facts which the poet uses to show why we should rejoice and why Mary should give us joy in regard to her Son Who is the source of all our joy.

The differences between the Latin and the English versions of the poem in the lines on the resurrection and ascension are marked. The Latin poet began his poem by naming Mary “mater Christi,” using the part of her Son’s name that identifies Him as the Messiah, whereas the poet of the English version told of His conception and birth entirely withholding the name of Mary’s Son in order to focus on the “maiden moder” through whom Christ came. Here, the Latin poet has obscured the name of Mary’s Son to emphasize Mary’s suffering. Referring to Him indirectly, through the suffering of Mary, “quia tui nati,/ quem dolebas mortem pati,” he contrasts to the suffering the bursting forth of His resurrection, “fulget resurrectio.” The English poet, on the other hand, as he tells of how Mary’s Son is crucified and rises, names Him for the first time. He does not use the name “Christ,” but the personal name “iesu,” which emphasizes the human bond between Mary and Christ and the humanity “þat bolede deit for monis loue.” The English poet stresses the cosmic meaning of the event, that Jesus suffered death
because of His love for mankind. And by his abrupt contrasting of life to death, "Þat dehit was, quiic up aros," he emphasizes the power which Christ will fully reveal in the next joy, His ascension, where for the first time the poet will name Him "crist."

Glade us maiden, crist up stey & in heuene þe i-sey; He bar him seluen into is clos.

"Make us glad, maiden," the poet repeats the address of the opening stanza as he reaches the central point in his poem and prepares to present the upward motion of Mary's own assumption. The account of the fourth joy, when "crist up stey," was prepared for by the third joy, when Christ "quiic up aros." It is the basis for the fifth joy, when Mary will be brought to joy, and for mankind's appeal in the last three lines for "Ioye þat is endeles." As he tells how Christ in entering heaven prepared a place for Mary and for mankind, for the first time the English poet presents the joy as an action. In a series of three clauses with three active verbs and one implied active verb, he says, Christ ascended, you saw Him (go into) heaven, He bore Himself into His "clos."

It is at this point in the Latin and the English that both poets name Christ. "Gaude Christo ascendente,/ quod in celum, te vidente,/ motu fertur proprio." Rejoice in Christ ascending, Who as you watched was carried into heaven by His own power. Make us glad, maiden, the English poet says, Christ ascended and you saw Him go into heaven. By His own power He bore Himself into His enclosure. Stressing the tangible place Christ entered, the English poet prepares for his description, in the next stanza, of Mary herself in her bright palace in heaven.26

Glade us marie, to Ioye ibrout,— Muche wrchipe crist hau þe i-worut— in heuene brit in þi paleis; Per þat frut of þire wombe Be i-yefin us forto fonden in Ioye þat is endeles.

"Give us joy Mary, brought to joy." The poet begins the last stanza by repeating the appeal a fifth time to introduce Mary's fifth joy. With the final
joy he addresses Mary for the first time by her proper name, as if her name could be uttered only after the events which define her nature have been told. The poet returns to the mode of the first two joys. Again making an event into an attribute by which to identify Mary, he tells the fifth joy with an infinitive phrase, describing Mary as she is in the present as a result of her assumption. The assumption forms the final component of her name.

After addressing Mary as she now is in heaven, the poet bridges the time from that historically past moment of the assumption to the historically present moment in which he has named the joys. Brown's punctuation with dashes in line fourteen emphasizes the double possibility of temporal application. By the joys in the past and through all time "muche warchipe crist haue be i-worut." Now that the poet has oriented Mary's joy in literal time, in line fifteen he specifies Mary's perpetual state of joy, her condition, in terms of a place in heaven. This place was prepared for in the three lines on the ascension. Mary has now been placed in that same "clos" into which Christ bore Himself. In the English version the poet has given a further concreteness to Mary's palace. First, by placing her in heaven "brit," then by distinguishing her own palace from the rest of heaven, he has given a separate identity to Mary's joy within the joy of Christ. No such specific development of place is suggested by the Latin version, where the synthetic grammatical relationships of "in celi palatio" suggest rather the general quality of heaven, its richness, brightness and glory.

Omitting the appeal "Glade us," the last three lines put instead of a sixth joy of Mary the possible joy of mankind. They define the poet and his audience's present relationship to Mary's final joy, which they have not experienced, through the use of the figure "pat frut of hire wombe." This figure of fruit, used as well by the Latin poet and often found in the liturgy, is presented in sharp contrast to the categories of time and space by which the poet has organized his poem. 27 It is a mystical figure expressing the unitive experience of God: "Per," in that palace, give us the fruit of thy womb to taste, to try, to experience in endless joy. Christ is the source, the experience of Him the fruit or state itself of joy, "Ioye pat is endeles." But at the same time as the poet reveals a glimpse of heavenly delight, with these last three lines he has defined mankind's distance from joy. "Per," in that place, distinguishes by space the place where the joy will be experienced from the place where man is now. "Pat frut . . . be i-yefin us forto foden," by verb tense and time and by the very fact that Christ is presented in a figure of which Mary is the basis and medium, the poet shows man's distance in time.
and vision from the future endless enjoyment. This distance is what, through naming and securing Mary's intercession, the poet seeks to close with his words.

Looking back at the structure of the whole poem from the perspective of this final petition to Mary in virtue of the five joys by which the poet has named her, a certain proportionate correspondence between the parts of the poem can be seen which explains the modifications the poet of the English version has made from his Latin source. The two joys of the last stanza of the English poem, with their account of Mary's entry into the palace of heaven and the petition to Mary that there in heaven the fruit of her womb be given us to experience in endless joy, correspond to the two joys of the opening stanzas, where the coming of Christ is seen through her motherhood. The opening stanza and the closing stanza are focused on Mary's motherhood, the last fulfilling the first, but in an imperfect way. The two joys of the central stanza tell of the manifestation of God as man, and the events of the resurrection and ascension of Christ are the power in history by which the present moment and the hope of the future have been made possible. Now, by virtue of the events of the two central joys—the resurrection and the ascension—as she was the mother of Christ, so Mary has become the mother of man's future joy. Man's joy will be the experience of the beatific vision. Now in his position on earth his joy is hidden from him, but both by virtue of the Incarnation and through Mary who was the medium of Christ's taking flesh, and who is now in fact in heaven, man asks to be granted joy.

The whole poem is an address to Mary with the end of joy in view. The way in which the poet transforms events to names reflects the proportions the poet has established. Mary's names are aspects of the state of joy. The fact that the ascension is recounted not as a name, but as an event, expresses the element of time and the power which have established the poem's proportion. Because of the ascension of Christ into heaven, Mary could be assumed to Him. Now in present time man stands below; Mary is above. Now again Mary is the medium of birth, but this time of man's entrance into heaven, and now again as during Mary's pregnancy, the glory of Christ is hidden from man in the present moment as man hopes for but does not fully experience joy. (See Figure 7 and descriptive note.)

The English poet's choice of stanzaic form corresponds to this same proportion of Christ being hidden, then revealed, then hidden again, as the poet couples the annunciation with Christ's birth, the resurrection with His
ascension, and Mary's assumption with mankind's final prayer. And the poet's withholding of the messianic name of Mary's Son until the events of the resurrection and ascension and the hiding of His identity again in the last three lines are further components of this same proportion. The succession of titles for Mary, "maiden, moder," "ful of gode," "maiden" again, and finally her full naming, "marie," in the last stanza show the shift of focus through the poem until the poet formulates his final petition in virtue of what he has already said.

As part of this double correspondence between parts of the poem—the first two joys on Mary's motherhood of God corresponding to the last two on her motherhood of man, and the central two joys which manifest Christ to the endless joy of Mary revealed, yet concealed, in the figure of the fruit of her womb—there is another structural quality of the English version which distinguishes it from the Latin. Because the poet has fixed the events as timeless names, and because he embodies the quality of Mary's joy in a figure of space, the effect of the poem on the mind's eye is pictorial. Like illuminated figures or figures in stained glass, each naming of Mary presents an image of the joy, and we can compare the poet's presentation of the joys to their illuminations. In the lines on the annunciation and birth we see Mary and the angel, his words of salutation, the dove descending to the Virgin's ear, the lily. In the resurrection we see Christ bursting from His tomb, and in the ascension we see Him disappear with only His feet left below the clouds of heaven which enclose Him, while Mary and the disciples stand below gazing up. We then see Mary enthroned in a palace in heaven. But the final figure of Christ, which shows His present hidden relationship to man, is not given in visual concepts. In the figure of man's future fullness of joy, Christ is presented to the blind senses as what man can touch and taste and consume.