

Holy Thursday (Songs of Innocence) key Facts

Writer: William Blake | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

- **Title:** Holy Thursday
- **Poet:** William Blake (1757-1827)
- **Publication:** "Holy Thursday" was published in Blake's collection *Songs of Innocence* in 1789.
- **Form:** The poem has three quatrains (four-line stanzas)
- **Rhyme Scheme:** Each stanza has two rhyming couplets. So, each stanza follows the rhyme scheme of AABB.
- **Published Date:** First published in 1789
- **Genre:** A lyric poem
- **Tone:** Celebratory and joyful.
- **Stanzas:** Three quatrains (four-line stanzas)
- **Total Lines:** 12 lines.
- **Setting:** A London church on Holy Thursday

What is Holy Thursday?

In the Christian religion, Holy Thursday is the day that remembers Jesus Christ's Last Supper with his disciples (followers). It is the night before he was arrested and crucified. During the Last Supper, Jesus shared bread and wine with his followers. Christians celebrate this day and organize programs across churches. In Blake's poem "Holy Thursday," poor children from charity schools attend a program at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. On this day, they will be given food.

Important Note: In Blake's poem "Holy Thursday" from *Songs of Innocence* (1789), the speaker watches a group of poor orphan children walking to St. Paul's Cathedral in London on Holy Thursday. It seems that the speaker takes an innocent look at poverty and charity, at least on the surface. The speaker feels touched by the poor children's beauty and innocence. He asks readers to feel sympathy for the poor, hungry children. However, there's also a hint of criticism in the poem. The speaker doesn't question why these children are poor and hungry in the first place. This is where Blake's criticism lies. He hides it under the veil of innocence.