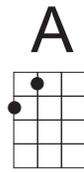
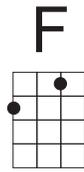
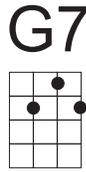
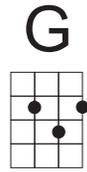
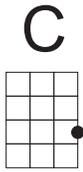


The Gift



A [C] poor orphan girl named Maria
Was walking the market one [G] day
She stopped for to rest by the road side
Where a [G7] bird with a broken wing [C] lay

A few moments passed till she saw it
For it's feathers were covered with [G] sand
And soon clean and wrapped it was traveling
In the [G7] warmth of Maria's small [C] hand

She [F] happily gave her last peso
On a [C] cage made of rushes and twine.
She [F] fed it loose corn from the market
And [C] watched it grow stronger with [G] time

Now the [C] gift giving service was coming
And the Church hung with tinsel and [G] lights
An' all of the town folk brought presents
To [G7] lay by the manger that [C] night

There were diamonds, incense and perfumes
And packages fit for a [G] King
But for one ragged bird in his small cage
[G7] Maria had nothing to [C] bring

[F] She waited till just before midnight
So [C] no one would see her go in.
And [F] crying she knelt by the manger
For her [C] gift was unworthy of [G] Him

Then a [D] voice spoke to her through the darkness,
"Maria what brings you to [A] me?"
"If the bird in the cage is your offering
[A7] Open the door let me [D] see."

So she trembled she did as he asked her
And out of the cage the bird [A]flew
Soaring up into the rafters
On a [A7] wing that had healed good as [D] new

An' [G] just as the midnight bells rang out
And the [D] little bird started to sing
A [G] song that no words could recapture
For its [D] beauty was fit for a [A] King

Now [D] Maria felt blessed just to listen
To the cascade of notes sweet and [A] long
As her offering was lifted to heaven
By the [A7] very first nightingales [D] song