

# The Interim

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## Curriculum Supplement For Schools

The *Interim Plus* is a periodical dedicated to educational matters and specifically designed to assist teachers in integrating relevant life issues in their lesson planning.

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Preparations for Christmas seem to begin even before Halloween in the secular world, so intent are commercial enterprises on selling products and capitalizing on the emotions that people feel around this time of year. In this curriculum supplement we shall concentrate on this growing phenomenon and ask some simple questions to get a better appreciation of both the spirit of Christmas and the activities associated with its celebration.



Some claim that there has been and continues to be an agenda to secularize Christmas - that is - to turn it from a holiday and holy-day celebrating the historical birth of Jesus into just another cultural event. Is there any substance to this claim and if this is so what can Christians do to counteract that?

Around this time of the year there is a spate of calls to radio talk shows pointing out how commercialized the Christmas celebration has become. Often, the talk show hosts themselves raise the issue, knowing full well that it will trigger a passionate response from listeners, one way or the other. Callers bring up a development or occurrence reported in the news that somewhere an attack has been made on "Christmas". Evidence cited usually include banning of school "Christmas" assemblies, songs and carols, the declaration of Christmas as a statutory holiday, "seasons greetings" cards, "happy holidays" greetings in stores, opposition to display of Nativity scenes, efforts to change the name of Christmas trees to "holiday" trees. Perhaps, students could come up with their own examples of Christmas related controversies from their local community.

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One can also ask if there is a double standard when it comes to downplaying the role of religions in general in the public square. Many observers feel that special efforts are made to downgrade Christianity, but not so Islam or Hinduism, or Buddhism, etc. Is the secular agenda to actively de-emphasize Christmas' origin, the historical event that is the birth of Jesus Christ, but tolerate or remain neutral regarding other non-Christian holidays' origins?

If this is so, there is a kind of irony in that religious liberty per se seems to be only possible with Christianity, for it is a general Christian principle to never force religion on anyone, but rather to allow everyone the freedom, knowledge, and opportunity to choose belief or non-belief for themselves. And it is this Christian approach that results in freedom of expression and real toleration in the marketplace of competitive philosophies and ideas.

### General Questions and Activities

1. Have students scan the papers, watch television shows, observe the ads for a three-week period. Ask them to make notes on what they see and hear relative to ads or messages concerning the coming Christmas. Then let them answer whether or not there is a "war on Christmas". If so, how is it manifested? Should Christians be concerned about this?
2. If secularists are trying "to pretend that it is possible to enter the true meaning of Christmas by leaving out Jesus Christ". Is it possible to do this? Is this what happens when Jews, Muslims, Hindus and others simply join in the festivities as a gesture of goodwill, minus belief in the person of Jesus?
3. Is the feast recognizable as a Christian religious celebration or is it instead a secular bonanza for the merchants many of whom make 40% of their sales in the few weeks preceding and immediately following December 25th?

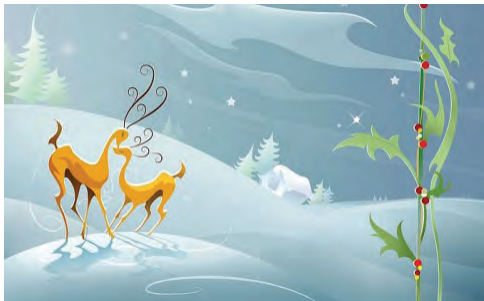
4. If there has been a falling away or decline in the religious importance of the celebration, what has caused this state of affairs? Has this decline (if it really is a decline) been felt all over equally or more so in the developed western world? Or can one make the case that there is a stronger Christian spirit at work, beneath the surface?
5. The early Christians were persecuted for many reasons in the Roman Empire. But over time the Christian religion became so successful that it rivaled and supplanted the Romans' pagan religions. Attempted suppression resulted in the creation of martyrs and their witness plus the Christian message made the Church grow and expand all the more. Is there a sort of persecution of Christians today? If so, is it likely to have a similar result, giving Christians renewed fervour when under attack?

### Secularization of Christmas?

Commentators on western civilization and culture try to make the case that we have to get used to the fact that today most people are not really Christian in any real sense of the term. And yet most people want to continue to have a mid-winter celebration; and, since Christmas has occupied this role, they are happy to go along with it, but with no genuine commitment to the religious beliefs on which it is founded. Thus we see a yuletide holiday steeped in the imagery of a religion in which the majority no longer believes. So claim many secularists. Here are several excerpts [paraphrased for the sake of brevity] from different sources, followed by questions for discussion.

### Merry Christmas from an Atheist

Christmas has become less meaningful... not because of a secular hostility, but rather due to the lukewarm faith of Christian believers themselves who give Christ little more than a walk-on role at Christmas. ...While Christmas does play an important role in the lives of most people in the West, the feast is increasingly defined for most people not by religious experience, but by shopping and drinking, the office party and the family meal, the mad rush to buy presents and not get seduced into spending too much money.



He has a Christmas tree in the

house, sends out Christmas cards, buys Christmas presents, cooks a goose on Christmas Day and listens to Christmas music and gospel singing while he engages in these activities. But he claims to not have a religious bone in his body with no intention of going to church, singing carols or pretending to his daughter that the Nativity story is any less of a fairy tale than the story of reindeers pulling Santa's sledge....It is quite possible, in other words, for secularism to co-exist with the celebration of Christmas.

The idea of moral progress or of universal values is widely derided. ...As a result we have come not only to celebrate diversity and difference but also to fear promoting strong ideas or giving offence to peoples and cultures.....few would deny that a widespread fear of offending minorities is helping restrict the public role of Christmas.

[www.kenanmalik.com/essays/bergens\\_xmas.html](http://www.kenanmalik.com/essays/bergens_xmas.html)

### Smart Parenting: Fighting for Christ at Christmas



Parents, take this quiz and then give it to your children: What are you thinking about, what are the "Holiday visions" dancing in your head? What are you really looking forward to as the "Holidays" are approaching?

My experience as a parish priest is that most answers from our children would be: the toys, gadgets or clothes they want to receive. Most adults would answer the family meal and getting together with relatives and close friends.

In the secular world the answers above merit an "A+." If life has no religious dimension, if God is not a part of personal life, then He will be abstracted from the culture as well. What then is left, except the accumulation of more things? From a Christian perspective however, the answers merit an "F." Remember the words of Christ: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," (Mathew. 6: 21).

How many know the full theological meaning of the Nativity Feast? If we don't, we become susceptible to secularizing energy (fed by a commercial spirit) of the culture. Put another way, one of the most powerful things we





can do for our families to counter the slide into the spiritual wasteland of the commercial culture is to deepen our understanding about the Nativity of Christ. Parents must teach themselves first, and then they can teach their children.

It starts way back in Genesis. Adam and Eve were made in God’s image and called to be like Him. They start out in Paradise with the potential of full union with God but still experienced testing. They failed the test by the sin of pride. They are cast out of paradise into the world and are disordered -- inclined to sin and destined for death.

.....God responded to this deep existential catastrophe in many ways -- all leading to the Incarnation of His Son. A signature event was the calling of Abraham (then called Abraam) out of a land riddled with paganism and polytheism. God made a covenant with Abraham that made him the leader of God’s people -- the people of the First Covenant (Genesis 17) -- and the “father of many nations.”

As the people grew in number and over the course of centuries various prophets emerged, among them Isaiah, who said that God would send a Messiah (a deliverer and king):

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanu-el....The prophet described Immanu-el: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

The prophet Micah told us the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days” (Micah 5:2).

The whole life of Jesus, His teachings, the Last Supper, Calvary, His Death and the Resurrection is tied to this. Parents, the leaders, and teachers of the domestic church have to work with their children to make these connections between feasts such as the Nativity, all the other feasts of the Church.

Keep Christ in Christmas. It adds to the joy.

[www.orthodoxytoday.org/view/smart-parenting-viii.-fighting-for-christ-at-christmas-combating-secularism](http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/view/smart-parenting-viii.-fighting-for-christ-at-christmas-combating-secularism)

**Secular Christmas:  
A critique of the critique**

The lights are twinkling, the Salvation Army bells are ringing, and Christians are up in arms against the supposed secular “war” on Christmas: it’s definitely Ad-

vent. But alongside “aggressive secularism,” there is another secularism at play in our culture. This second secularism is one that practically no longer believes in the reality of God.



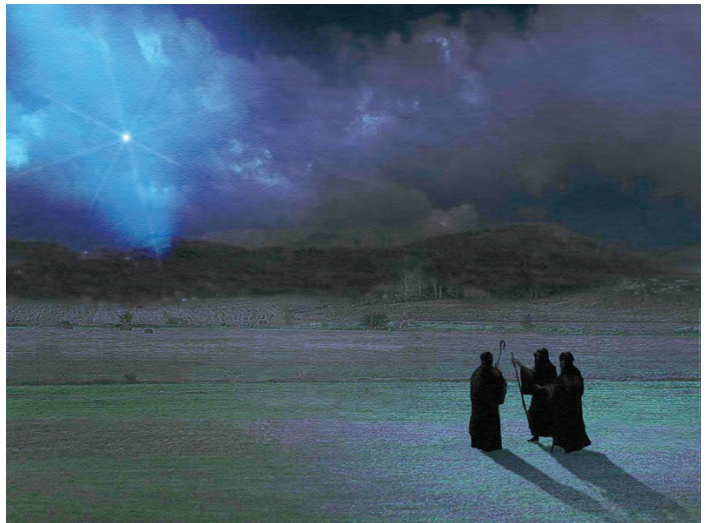
It does not actively work to remove God or Christian symbols from the public square, but does so rather by apathy. A society immersed in this second type of secularism may for a time continue to employ these symbols, but as the years pass, and the living connection from the Faith becomes more distant, it too forgets the Christian roots of Christmas.

As aggressively as certain secularists would remove any mention of God from Christmas, so too would some Christians remove any Christmas symbol that is not explicitly Christian. But do we need to start shaping our gingerbread cookies into crosses instead of little men so that they are no longer “secular”? Is the Christmas ham pagan until emblazoned with an image of the Holy Family?

In an Advent homily from many years ago, before he became Pope Benedict XVI, then Joseph Ratzinger, mused:

*What is Advent? Many answers can be given. We can grumble and say that it is nothing but a pretext for hectic activity and commercialism, prettified with sentimental clichés in which people stopped believing ages ago. In many cases this may be true, but it is not the whole picture.*

*We can say the reverse, that Advent is a time when, in the midst of an unbelieving world, something of the luminous quality of this lost faith is still perceptible, like a visual echo. Just as stars are visible long after they have become extinct, since their erstwhile light*



*is still on its way to us, so this mystery frequently offers some warmth and hope even to those who are no longer able to believe in it.*

*We can also say that Advent is a time when a kindness that is otherwise almost entirely forgotten is mobilized; namely, the willingness to think of others and give them a token of kindness. Finally we can say that Advent is a time when old customs live again, for instance in the singing of carols that takes place all over the country. In the melodies and the words of these carols, something of the simplicity, imagination and glad strength of our forefathers makes itself heard in our age, bringing consolation and encouraging us perhaps to have another go at faith which could make people so glad in such hard times.*

The substructure of much of the contemporary secular Christmas remains essentially Christian. A spirit of wonder, a sense of hope, an inexplicable inner movement toward kindness—these things still mark our secular Christmas. And so people who may not be sure whether or not they believe in God—no, they are sure they do not—for some reason find themselves darkening church doors this time of year.

Christians ought to treat the secular Christmas with care. It may be one of the last vestiges of Christianity widely present in our culture. As such, I would contend, a secular Christmas is better than no Christmas at all.

<http://whosoeverdesires.wordpress.com/2009/12/10/secular-christmas-a-critique-of-the-critique/>

### Questions

1. What common concerns are the three observers expressing? Is their motivation different? How?
2. With which point of view would you agree with the most? Why?
3. Is the third excerpt a sort of middle way among the approaches to Christmas?
4. Is the Christian message once again counter-cultural and a source of true strength for those searching for a meaning in life?

### SOME SUGGESTIONS

Use an Advent Calendar... with quotes from the Old and New Testament Scriptures. [An excellent comprehensive list of general Advent resources can be accessed at: <http://www.antiochian.org/1132082814>.]

Institute a family prayer time with young children and discuss the passages...it is a beautiful way to prepare for Christ's birth.

Consider the meaning of the gifts given by the Magi (prophesized by Micah) and the giving and receiving of gifts today, then ask the children how to put into practice the often quoted phrase: "it is better to give than receive".

Reclaim Merry Christmas greetings. Let no secular greeting by anyone go unanswered

When gifts are received, tie this into being thankful and giving glory to God for all things.

During a meal with family, friends, or acquaintances, one can say prayer or blessing.

### Christmas Traditions

It seems that every nation has its own Christmas traditions – whether it be food, songs, gift exchanging, or ways of worship. Everything from stocking stuffers to Christmas trees to family gatherings, to midnight Mass has been passed down from generation to generation.

Of course there are both religious and secular traditions. Which of these dominates in society, in the workplace, in the school, and in the home? We know that the religious tradition is the core or the root of the holiday's existence and it has carried much stronger history and stability. But as was mentioned above many today do not *connect the celebration with its Christian origins. Some continue to observe Christmas for all its joy, togetherness, and tradition; but they simply remove the Christian value and replace it with positive secular imagery and verbalization.*

Ultimately Christmas's original purpose can only be maintained in the heart of the ordinary person. Severing a tradition's ties from its true origins renders the tradition a sterile or quaint expression of human goodwill. Not a bad thing in itself, but so far short of the reason behind the season, and therefore not really meaningful. This is why it is important to understand and remember that it is Jesus who brings life to traditions.

Students can be directed to research, consider, and then outline the historical origins and cultural importance of each of the following traditions associated with **Christmas**.

**Christ's birth:** Christmas as a birthday party: read St. Luke's chapter two.

**Santa Claus:** He is a visual dimension of Christmas in our modern age.

**Lights:** The many bright lights found hanging on trees, streets, homes and in shopping centres around Christmas.

**Holly:** An evergreen plant.

**Mistletoe:** A pagan symbol.



**Candles:** Used in churches all over the world in their services.

**Stockings:** Receptacles for gifts.

**Family Feasting:** Sharing of food with family and extended family is very much central to Christmas.

**Carols:** Christmas hymns, carols and holiday songs, Christian or secular, are heard and sung with wide acceptance.

**Other traditions:** Carolling, chocolates, crèche, fish dishes, pudding, poinsettas, candy cane, elves, greeting cards.



### Questions

1. For a century Santa Claus has been found in shopping centers, movies, and Christmas decorations, etc.. He was created by man for man. Should we get rid of Santa Claus or reclaim him for Christ? How?
2. Kids could be asked to share their home traditions on how their family celebrates the birth of Christ (perhaps a one page report) and reflects a particular tradition representative of the cultural diversity of Canada.

[www.allaboutpopularissues.org/christmas-facts.htm](http://www.allaboutpopularissues.org/christmas-facts.htm)

### Christmas and Pro-life

The following entry is an excerpt from an essay by Frederica Mathewes-Greene *The Pro-Life Cause, Orthodoxy, and Hope*

..Abortion was common in the ancient Roman Empire. ....The ancient, pagan world was a harsh one. Not only were children aborted before birth, but a newborn child was not officially received into a family until its father picked it up and held it. If the father didn't want the child he simply refused to take it up, and the child was legally abandoned. This was called "exposing" an infant; it would be placed in some public place, and the social fiction was that someone else might pick it up and care for it. Sometimes people did take in these babies, and rear them to be sold as slaves or put on the street as prostitutes. But, often enough, no one took the child before it was found by dogs or other animals, or died of exposure and starvation.

And this was legal. It was a harsh world. Christians stood out as different, in that world. They were different in seeing every human being as worthy of dignity, whether free or slave, male or female, Jew or Gentile (as St. Paul said in Galatians 3:21). One of the big differences between Christians and pagans was that

Christians did not have abortions. From the earliest years, the Church Fathers spoke against abortion.

....This stand against abortion and exposure of infants is, in fact, one of the things that attracted people to the Christian faith. Women were drawn to a religion that, for a change, would stop men from taking their children away.

Our faith's affirmation of life from the moment of conception is evident in the passage in the Gospel of Luke, in which Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, and Elizabeth says that her unborn son leaped for joy at the sound of Mary's voice. She says, "Why do I deserve such honor, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? For when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." (Luke 1:39-45) The unborn John the Forerunner recognized the presence of Christ and his mother, and Elizabeth, with prophetic insight, realized what was happening.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not become a human being on Christmas Day, but 9 months earlier, on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, when the angel appeared to the Virgin Mary and told her that she would conceive a child. The Forerunner did not become a human being on the day he was born; he was already a prophet and a servant of the Most High, even in his mother's womb.

....We can make a difference today by helping pregnant women choose life.....Over and over again, women told me, "I had my abortion because of a relationship." Most of the time it was the father of the child who was pressuring her to have an abortion; in other cases, it was her parents. In 88% of the cases, the woman had had the abortion because someone she loved told her she should.

When I asked, "What could anyone have done to help you have the baby," Over and over women told me, "I would have had the baby if there had been somebody to stand by me." They weren't asking for a lot; they

weren't asking for housing and jobs and a handout. They were just asking for a friend.

All over this city there are pregnancy care resource centers that exist to give pregnant women that support. They give a lot more than that, but the most important thing is standing by the pregnant woman and helping her be strong. Again, look in the yellow pages under "alternatives to abortion." These organizations always need help from people who believe in their mission. They need donations of diapers, baby formula, maternity clothes, and they need volunteers, too. Think about giving your time to one of them. That's the third reason for hope: you can prevent abortion, one case at a time, right in your own neighborhood, just by being a friend.

Finally, I want to recognize you for your courage and dedication.....If you stand up on this issue, you will be attacked. Pro-choice is still the socially-approved position, and it takes a lot of courage to publicly say that you stand for life. In every generation there's an issue like this, that draws a line between those who will stand up for what is right, and those who just go along. Only the bravest people take a stand, and continue to bear witness even when others mock them and misrepresent them; only the bravest keep standing when, from a worldly perspective, the cause looks lost. Only the most dedicated people are willing to keep working for change, when the struggle is all uphill and they reap nothing but rejection.

You are those people. And you are not alone. The angels and saints see you persevering in this labor, just as champions of earlier generations did their part. The struggle is not lost. Despite overwhelming pressure to favor abortion, the tide of public opinion is beginning to turn. Young people are leading the way.....Your efforts on behalf of this cause, to help pregnant women and preserve the lives of unborn children, are seen by God and the angels, and will stand for eternity. You are the heroes of this hour—and, even if the hour looks dark, it truly is darkest before the dawn. Truth cannot be suppressed forever. You may wonder if the pro-choice side has won the day—but sooner or later, that day will end. No generation can rule from the grave. The time to get on the right side of history is now.

<http://silouanthompson.net/2012/01/the-pro-life-cause-orthodoxy-and-hope/>

### Questions

1. Why is Christmas the most important birthday party of all time? When Jesus was born, what kind of world did He enter? [cite different examples about the harshness of life, disease, lifespan, slavery, war, lack of security, hunger, etc.]
2. How does the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth af-

firm the truth and justice of the pro-life cause?

3. What reasons or evidence does Mathewes-Greene cite for saying that young people today are more pro-life than their parents?
4. What is the good news about the dignity and preciousness of life that the author offers in this essay?
5. What does she mean by her concluding statement "No generation can rule from the grave"?



### The Christ-Child

"The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,  
His hair was like a light.  
(O weary, weary were the world,  
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast  
His hair was like a star.  
(O stern and cunning are the kings,  
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,  
His hair was like a fire.  
(O weary, weary is the world,  
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood on Mary's knee,  
His hair was like a crown,  
And all the flowers looked up at Him,  
And all the stars looked down."

G.K. Chesterton

### Love Came Down

Love came down at Christmas;  
Love all lovely, love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Stars and angels gave the sign.

Christina G. Rossetti





## Questions

1. How do the poets treat the Christmas story?
2. Do we experience this type of belief today?

## The Real Presence of Christmas

December, 2007 *First Things*

Richard John Neuhaus

It is not a matter of revving ourselves up to experience again the wonder of the Christ Mass. There is no point in trying to recapitulate Christmas as you knew it when you were, say, seven years old. That way lies sentimentalities unbounded.

The alternative is the way of contemplation, of demanding of oneself the disciplined quiet to explore, and be explored by, the astonishment of God become one of us that we may become one with God. He embraced the whole of our experience, beginning as an embryo, as we began as an embryo. In his abject helplessness is our only help.

In response to the announcement by the angel, Mary, the mother of Our Lord, and Zechariah, the father of John the Baptizer, asked the same question: "How can this be?" Zechariah asked in disbelief. Mary asked in wonder. Zechariah doubted, while Mary exemplified the maxim of John Henry Newman that a thousand difficulties do not add up to a doubt.

That the Creator of all should become a creature is a *skandalon* that is of a piece with the scandal of the cross, the *skandalon* that God could die. Maternal love is joined to maternal mourning as the mother pondered and anticipated the sword that would pierce her own heart. This is the decisive turning point in the history



of man and, if you will, the history of God, for the two are one. *Finitum capax infiniti* – the finite is capable of the infinite.

There is in the Christian theological tradition the accent on God as the "Totally Other," the ineffable that transcends

our capacity to think or speak. J.B. Phillips' popular classic *Your God Is Too Small* is always recommended reading. To appreciate the total otherness of God is to be immune to the angry ravings of the "new atheists" who so ferociously attack a "God" in whom Christians do not believe.

Their God is too small, and yet not small enough. Throughout the ages, people had looked up into the heavens in search of God. Bearing Jesus in her womb, holding Jesus in her arms, Mary looked down into the face of God. Immanence and transcendence require one another. The Totally Other is the predicate of Emmanuel, God with us. *Finitum capax infiniti*.

Call it a paradox, call it a tension, call it a dialectic. Better still, call it Incarnation. *Incaratus est* is the end of playing off the infinite against the finite, the human against the divine, as though Reality were a zero-sum game. How can modern man believe in miracles, Rudolf Bultmann asked, when he knows how to switch on a light bulb? Or, as a parishioner opined the other day, why pray for the healing of a headache when Tylenol works so well? *Incaratus est* is the forging of an unbreakable union between the miraculous and the quotidian, the transcendent and the immanent. All our thinking, our creativity, our science, our labors, along with our sorrows and disappointments, is participation in the life of God become man, in faith's anticipation of our destiny fulfilled in the life of God.

Not for nothing is the day called Christ Mass. In the Eucharist, it happens again and again. Just as he says, this *is* his body, this *is* his blood. Sacramental realism is looking into the face of God as we look at the signs of bread and wine and confess with Thomas the Apostle, "My Lord, and my God!" Here, in this prescribed space and time, see God crucified, risen, and keeping his promise to be with us until his return in glory.

Catholics call it *transubstantiation*, reflecting the philosophical distinction between substance and accident. Rejecting the philosophy, Luther simply and adamantly insisted upon the sheer *isness* of the *is* in "This is my body." Others have wandered into the mists of subjectivity, suggesting in a hundred different ways that it is if you believe or feel or think it is. But there is no Real Presence without bodily presence.

In communing with loved ones who are not with us, we have our feelings, *our* memories, *our* visual images. But that is just it: They are *our* feelings, our memories, our visual images. There is no breaking out of the circle of subjectivity unless we are encountered by the *body* of the other. The other is embodied, as in *incarnate*. And so it is with the Totally Other, the infinite within our finite space and time.

Theologians of an orthodox persuasion sometimes say that the Real Presence does not mean physical pres-

ence. This is to guard against the debased notion of a cannibalistic consumption of a portion of human flesh and blood. That is indeed a gross distortion of our being encountered by, and receiving body and soul, the living Christ in his humanity and divinity. Yet I have come across people who are deeply troubled when they hear it said that the Real Presence is not a physical presence. They misunderstand that to mean that his presence is less than physical, when the point is that his presence is more than physical. The physical is part of the finitude of space and time, which is both embraced and transcended in the wonder of God become man. *Finitum capax infiniti*.

Mary asked, and we ask, "How can this be?" The fourth-century St. Ambrose wrote of the Real Presence: "Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature."

At the crèche and at the Christ Mass, we kneel to adore the human face of God. The *Adore Te Devote* is attributed to Thomas Aquinas:

Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore  
Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more,  
See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart  
Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art.

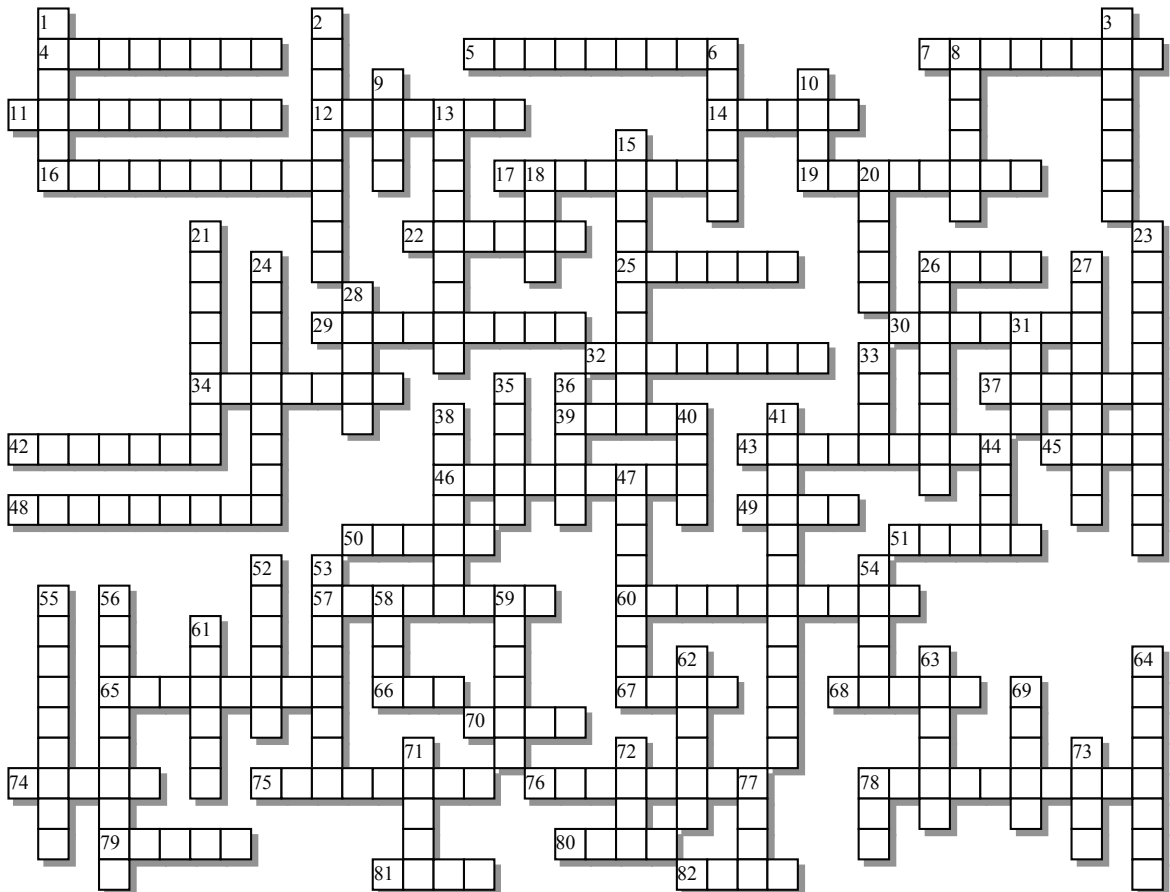
Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived;  
How says trusty hearing? That shall be believed;  
What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;  
Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.

Christmas. The Christ Mass. *Finitum capax infiniti*.

**Questions**

1. Have students reflect on this Christmas essay by Richard John Neuhaus.
2. What does she mean by *Finitum capax infiniti* – the finite is capable of the infinite?
3. In light of this explanation what does Christmas truly mean?

## Christmas Crossword



*Clues on next page*

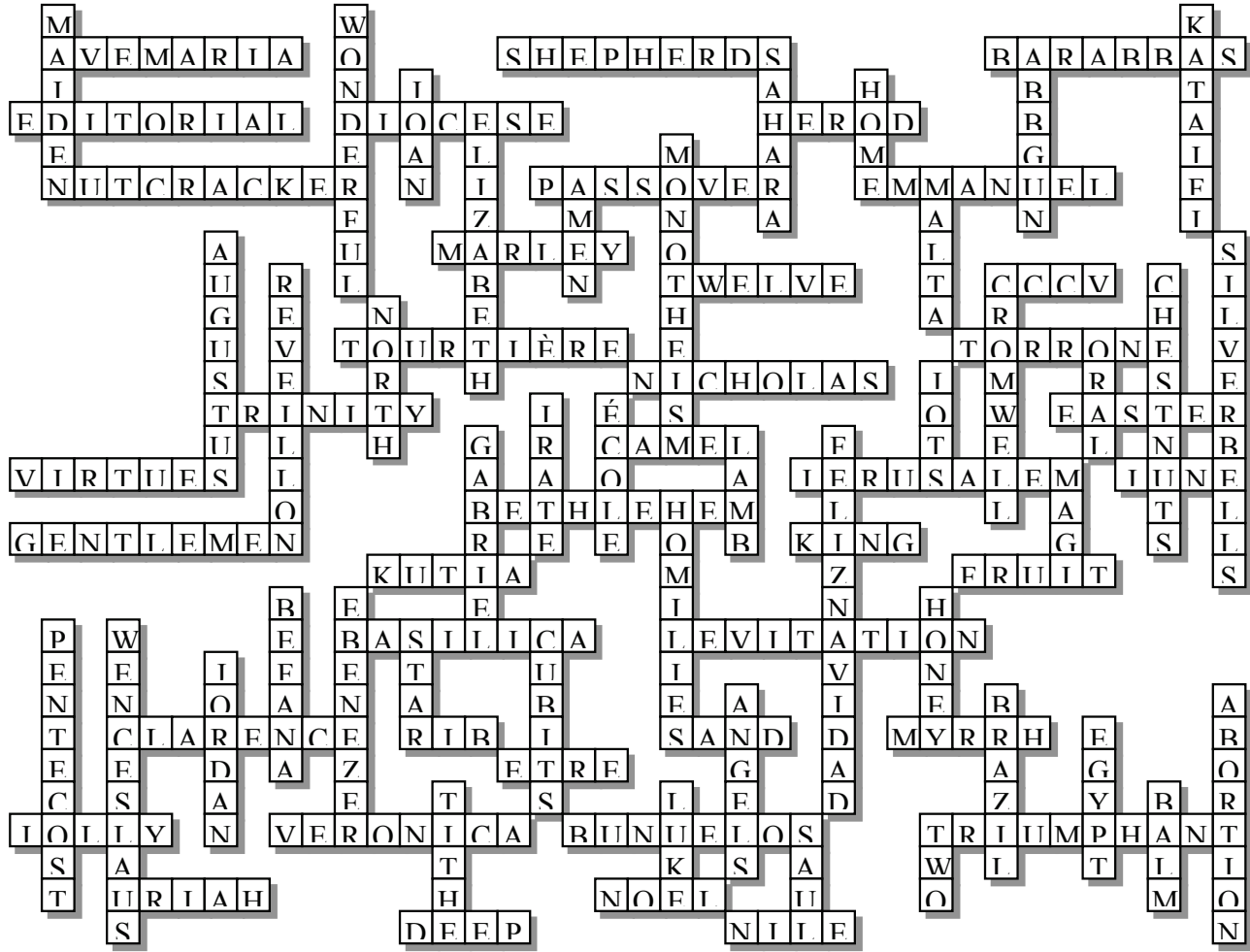


**Across:**

- 4 - Latin salutation to Joseph's wife
- 5 - the first people to come to see Jesus according to Scripture
- 7 - released instead of Jesus
- 11 - focused newspaper essay offering opinion
- 12 - organizational unit for Christian churches
- 14 - King of Judaea at the time of Christ's birth
- 16 - Name of the Tchaikovsky ballet performed around Christmas time each year.
- 17 - feast celebrating the Exodus
- 19 - "O Come O Come \_\_\_\_\_" advent song
- 22 - Scrooge's dead business partner (two words)
- 25 - the number of apostles
- 26 - to Cato it was 305
- 29 - a Quebec meat pie usually made with ground pork and/or veal, or beef
- 30 - an Italian nougat confection, typically made of honey, sugar, and egg white, coated in crushed, toasted almonds
- 32 - patron saint of sailors
- 34 - doctrine of Three Persons in One God
- 37 - day of the Resurrection
- 39 - Jesus compared a rich man to this animal
- 42 - there are 4 cardinals
- 43 - chief city of ancient Israel
- 45 - St. Peter's feast day is the 29th of this month
- 46 - town in which Christ was born
- 48 - "God Rest Ye Merry \_\_\_\_\_"
- 49 - David or Solomon
- 50 - a Ukrainian sweet grain pudding
- 51 - each tree is known by its own \_\_\_\_\_
- 57 - large church
- 60 - ability to fly enjoyed by some saints
- 65 - the guardian angel of George Bailey in "It's a Wonderful Life" Clarence
- 66 - donated by Adam
- 67 - the foolish man built his house on this
- 68 - gift of the wise men
- 70 - raison d' \_\_\_\_\_
- 74 - "Tis the season to be \_\_\_\_\_"
- 75 - dried the face of Jesus with her veil
- 76 - Mexican dish dough with hint of anise deep-fried & drenched in a syrup of brown sugar, cinnamon, and guava
- 78 - "O Come All ye Faithful, Joyful and \_\_\_\_\_"
- 79 - first husband of Bathsheba
- 80 - French expression "les bonnes nouvelles" or "the good news".
- 81 - "On a cold winter's night that was so \_\_\_\_\_"
- 82 - river turned bloody by Moses

**Down:**

- 1 - young girl
- 2 - "It's The Most \_\_\_\_\_ Time Of The Year"
- 3 - Greek phyllo-wrapped confections made from cinnamon and sugar and drizzled with honey
- 6 - extremely arid section of Africa
- 8 - What did Ralphie want for Christmas in "A Christmas Story"?
- 9 - saint from Orleans
- 10 - "I'll Be \_\_\_\_\_ For Christmas"
- 13 - Mary visited her immediately after the angel appeared to her
- 15 - belief in one God
- 18 - so be it
- 20 - Mediterranean island visited by St. Paul
- 21 - ordered the census to be taken at the time of Jesus' birth
- 23 - what you hear when "it's Christmas time in the city"
- 24 - In Quebec the Christmas Eve banquet is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 26 - In 1647 Christmas was made illegal In England by Puritan leader
- 27 - what were roasting on an open fire
- 28 - direction from Jerusalem to Nazareth
- 31 - type of history
- 33 - write down quickly
- 35 - angry
- 36 - where the élèves go daily
- 38 - name of the angel who appeared to Mary
- 40 - offspring of ewe
- 41 - Latino Merry Christmas
- 44 - The three wise men
- 47 - speeches on Sunday mornings
- 52 - According to folklore, this lady gives a lump of coal in the stockings of naughty children in Italy
- 53 - What is Scrooge's first name?
- 54 - "a land of milk and \_\_\_\_\_"
- 55 - Holy Spirit came as tongue of fire
- 56 - "Good King \_\_\_\_\_"
- 58 - What sign did the angels tell the shepherds to look for?
- 59 - Noah's boat was measured in these
- 61 - where Jesus was baptized by John
- 62 - "Hark the Herald \_\_\_\_\_"
- 63 - country with largest Catholic population
- 64 - deliberate killing of unborn child
- 69 - Where did Mary and Joseph immigrate with Jesus for a short period?
- 71 - donate a portion of money to church
- 72 - physician who wrote a gospel
- 73 - "There is a \_\_\_\_\_ in Gilead"
- 77 - persecuted early Christians
- 78 - number of each animal that Noah took into the ark



*Have A Blessed  
and Merry  
Christmas*