

The Interim PLUS

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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Christmas Curriculum Supplement

Christmas! The very word rings magically. But the reality of it is much more than mere magic. It is not a special trick. It is not a simple feel-good time of the year. It is not an excuse to buy and splurge and go overboard. Rather it should be truly special for the right reasons.

In this edition of *The Interim Plus* we present some resources to consider for classroom use (from kindergarten to Grade 12) that might help create a proper advent perspective for the celebration of Christ's birth. We enjoy putting together this particular edition because it inevitably brings back memories of childhood associated with the observance of this holy feast for teachers, students and parents.

There are four parts to this curriculum resource: a) ideas for reflecting on the feast all through the Advent period b) a couple of stories about Christmas plus a homily c) lessons for elementary grades d) some light material, including a crossword puzzle, that may awaken a sense of winsome nostalgia about Christmas past. Most of all, the material concentrates on the meeting of God and man at Christmas, centering on the salvation of mankind.

Whether elementary panel or secondary panel, there are activities and resources to make the advent preparations meaningful and spiritually rewarding for everyone. One suggestion is that in each of the advent weeks, each class develop its own advent process, liturgy, prayer exercise. Open with morning prayers each day and close with a general reflection on the Fridays.

These brief reflections could prove very challenging as a means of getting students involved and actually engaged in spiritual reflection on the real meaning of the "season".



Part A

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

The desire to prepare properly for Christmas should burn in our hearts despite the distractions, anxieties and worries associated with the secular hoopla of Christmas. In the midst of secular holidays how can we keep Christmas a holy-day? Good remarks are made in the three quotations provided. These state that the best way is for us to keep Jesus at the centre of our celebrations every Christmas.



Memory Awakens Hope

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, 1986

“Advent is concerned with that very connection between memory and hope which is so necessary to man. Advent’s intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church’s year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart’s memory so that it can discern the star of hope...it is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to **open doors of hope.**”

An Advent Examination

Edward Hays, *A Pilgrim’s Almanac*,

“Advent is the perfect time to clear and prepare the Way. Advent is a winter training camp for those who desire peace. By reflection and prayer, by reading and meditation, we can make our hearts a place where a blessing of peace would desire to abide and where the birth of the Prince of Peace might take place ... Daily we can make an Advent examination. Are there any feelings of discrimination toward race, sex, or religion? Is there a lingering resentment, an unforgiven injury living in our hearts? Do we look down upon others of lesser social standing or educational achievement? Are we generous with the gifts that have been given to us, seeing ourselves as their stewards and not their owners? Are we reverent of others, their ideas and needs, and of creation? These and other questions become Advent lights by which we may **search the deep, dark corners of our hearts.**”

What Are You Waiting For?

Excerpt adapted from Bill Brian Christmas homily

<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/waiting-for-christmas-brian-bill-sermon-on-christmas-eve-58100.asp>

Yes Advent is a time of waiting. But what are you waiting for this Christmas? Are you longing for anything? What are you expecting to receive? Are you looking forward to anything special this Christmas?...Are you like Simeon and Anna in the gospel of Luke, waiting for someone?

We all desire to be comforted. It’s a basic need since we all struggle with loneliness, emptiness, loss, failure, insecurity, depression and even desperation.Statistics unfortunately show that the Christmas season is one of the major crisis times of the year for people.

...Here’s the truth. Christmas splits people into two camps. Because of who Jesus is and what He came to do, He forces people to make a decision about Him.

Questions for discussion and reflection

1. What is the main thrust of each quotation respectively?
2. How does each help to define an aspect of Advent?
3. Is there one which moves you most?
4. Is there one that unsettles you a bit?



Ways to Prepare

We certainly spend enough time and enough money sometimes fruitlessly searching for the perfect gift and often settling for the material gift that is mundane or simply convenient or the year’s fad. Here are twenty ideas that can help connect our hearts and open our homes to Him, whatever our age may be, whether student, teacher, parent or grandparent.

1. Think ahead to how you might prepare for Advent in the home. See what each person in the family can contribute.
2. Think ahead about preparing for Advent in your school setting or classroom.
3. Give God one very special gift just from you to Him. Maybe your gift could be to forgive someone, or to give something up.
4. Set aside a special time to read the Christmas story in Luke 1:5-56 through to 2:1-20.
5. Set up a Nativity Scene in your home.
6. Have your class set up a Nativity scene in your

classroom.

7. Plan a project of good will this Christmas: do you have an elderly neighbour in need of home repairs? Can you give something to a charity?
8. Plan a project of good will for someone in your classroom or school that needs some help.
9. Give a surprise gift of service to each member of your family: run an errand for your brother, clean out a closet for your mother, prepare a lunch for your dad.
10. Compose a Christmas message and send it to someone in your class that you normally avoid.
11. Watch a warm Christmas film together with your family or friends, like "It's a Wonderful Life" or Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol".
12. Form a group and go "wassailing" Christmas carols, perhaps starting with your own school first thing in the morning as others arrive.
13. Help decorate your classroom and school with Christmas themes.
14. Study the many wonderful names given to Jesus and their meanings.
15. Set aside a time of family devotions on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning.
16. Attend Christmas Mass or other Christmas service together with your family.
17. Send Christmas cards or e-cards that convey a spiritual message.
18. Write a Christmas letter to a missionary, encouraging them and thanking them for giving their life in the service of the Lord.
19. Pick one of the Christmas characters and put yourself in their sandals. Imagine what it must have been like to witness the Christmas story first hand. Meditate on it.
20. Walk to your local church and pray. Attend and participate in public caroling.

Part B

WALKING TOWARDS THE ONE WHO IS COMING

Fr. Ugo Sartorio, Il Messaggero (translated from the Italian)

http://www.messaggerosantantonio.it/messaggero/pagina_articolo.asp?IDX=2183IDRX=195

Advent each year brings a breath of fresh air. As a time of new beginning to the liturgical year, it allows us to tidy up our thoughts, realign our hopes and desires, reorganize our plans, even after periods of tiredness when life has become messy and tangled up. We start to get serious again, sensing that in the flowing of time, the Lord gives us opportunities that would be a shame to waste. The first of these is to reactivate our waiting mood, actually wake up, because from the distance the Lord is drawing near, and He comes "like a thief", a biblical image that at first sight seems rather strange, denoting speed and unpredictability. It's almost a warning to make us understand that it's impossible to be waiting for the Lord if you are not alert, scanning Scripture and reading the signs of the times. Often, unfortunately, the waiting of Christians is not so manifest, and in this regard one is led to think about the words of the writer, Ignazio Silone, restless believer, who used to say: "I distrust those Christians who wait for the coming of the Lord with the same indifference as being on the sidewalk waiting for the bus." Making the waiting a real spiritual experience is the first requisite in approaching Christmas as genuine protagonists.



There is a second verb that leads us to the grotto at Bethlehem, walking. Man is a being who walks. Think of the parents who can't wait for their baby to take her first steps, beginning to explore life. Think back to pre-historic times, three million years ago, when man first learned the erect posture, inaugurating a new way of living in the world. Think of Jesus two thousand years ago who walked the roads of Palestine meeting with the disciples and the multitudes, the rich and the poor, with a preference for the latter. For the writer, Mauro Corona, rough and honest man, a lover of the woods and mountains, three things are necessary for walking: a bit of time, a lot of good will and motivation. The first two, says Mauro Corona, can be found quite

easily, the third, however, is the most difficult. You can't place one foot in front of the other thousands of times if there are no good reasons. And that goes for our journey to Christmas. First we have to find good reasons, maybe we need to dust off dormant embers and reignite them. Or, change direction.

After waiting and walking, there is another verb that must be recaptured and considered so that Advent can achieve its end: rejoice. Without joy, Christmas would not be Christmas. Although the joy of Christmas is often a litmus test highlighting all the situations where there is no joy, the fact is serenity and inner peace may be lacking. I think of those who are depressed and can't find any light, even for a moment, too annoyed by too many lights. Many, even at Christmas, especially at Christmas, are spectators of other people's joy, as if they were trapped in an invincible solitude. They may be surrounded by love, but love does not reach them. They hear words of encouragement, but these sound like empty words. There is great suffering in these people, and not least in those who are also close to them and feel useless, unable to establish a connection. What do you say? First of all, not all that glitters is gold, because what many flaunt as joy is just a forced sense of joy, an artificially induced happiness. Moreover, even in midst of suffering, in spite of suffering - although it is not easy - it is possible to keep and fan the flame of joy. I am convinced that only the joy that knows how to resist attacks even corrosive of life itself (like sad surprises, losses, failures) has come through the ordeal and then it is truly ours. Christmas is a time of this discreet joy, unobtrusive and true. Face to face with God, who always loves us. That's why we can wish each other, Merry Christmas!



Many years ago, there was a very wealthy man who shared a passion for art collecting with his son. They had priceless works by Picasso and Van Gogh adorning the walls of their family estate.

As winter approached, war engulfed the nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram. His son had died.

Distraught and lonely, the old man faced the upcoming Christmas holidays with anguish and sadness. The joy of the season had vanished with the death of his son.

On Christmas morning, a knock on the door awakened the depressed old man. As he walked to the door, the masterpieces of art on the walls only reminded him that his son was not coming home. As he opened the door he was greeted by a soldier with a large package in his hands who said, "I was a friend of your son. I was the one he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you."

The soldier mentioned that he was an artist and then gave the old man the package. The paper gave way to reveal a portrait of the man's son. Though the world would never consider it the work of a genius, the painting featured the young man's face in striking detail. Overcome with emotion, the man hung the portrait over the fireplace, pushing aside millions of dollars-worth of art. His task completed, the old man sat in his chair and spent Christmas gazing at the gift he had been given.

The painting of his son soon became his most prized possession, far eclipsing any interest in the pieces of art for which museums around the world clamored.

The following spring, the old man died. The art world

Questions for reflection, discussion

1. Is the title a paradox?
2. How can waiting be a spiritual exercise?
3. What is the importance of walking as an activity? Why is it difficult to do?
4. Why is Christmas so bereft of joy for so many?
5. What is the true joy of Christmas?

Whoever Takes the Son: A Modern Parable

http://www.frtommylane.com/homilies/years_abc/second_sunday_after_christmas-2.htm

waited with anticipation for the upcoming auction. According to the will of the old man, all the art works would be auctioned on Christmas Day, the day he had received the greatest gift.

The day soon arrived and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paintings. Dreams would be fulfilled that day.

The auction began with a painting that was not on anyone's museum list. It was the painting of the man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid, but the room was silent. "Who will open the bidding with \$100?" No one spoke. Finally someone said, "Who cares about that painting. It's just a picture of his son. Let's move on to the good stuff."

The auctioneer responded, "No, we have to sell this one first. Now, who will take the son?" Finally, a neighbor of the old man offered \$10 dollars. "That's all I have. I knew the boy, so I'd like to have it."

The auctioneer said, "Going once, going twice...gone." The gavel fell.

Cheers filled the room and someone exclaimed, "Now we can bid on the real treasures!"

The auctioneer looked at the room filled with people and announced that the auction was over. Everyone was stunned. Someone spoke up and said, "What do you mean, it's over? We didn't come here for a painting of someone's son. There are millions of dollars-worth of art here! What's going on?"

The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the Father, whoever takes the son...gets it all."

Puts things in perspective, doesn't it? The message is the same this Christmas. Because of the Father's love... whoever takes the Son gets it all.

Will you take Him this Christmas?

You're invited to a birthday party tonight. It's the birthday of Jesus. It's His party but He wants to give you a present. He wants to give you the gift of Himself. Will you take Him?

Questions for reflection, discussion

1. How is this a Christmas story?
2. Is the suspense built up properly? How?
3. What does the auction represent?

4. Why were the bidders fooled?
5. Are we really aware of the birthday party being celebrated?
6. What are you bringing to the party?

A Christmas Parable

by Louis Cassels as retold by Fr. Tommy Lane in a Christmas homily

http://www.frtoommylane.com/homilies/years_abc/second_sunday_after_christmas-2.htm

"Once upon a time there was a man who looked upon Christmas as a lot of humbug. He wasn't a Scrooge. He was a kind and decent person, generous to his family, upright in all his dealings with other men. But he didn't believe all that stuff about Incarnation which churches proclaim at Christmas. And he was too honest to pretend that he did. "I am truly sorry to distress you," he told his wife, who was a faithful churchgoer. "But I simply cannot understand this claim that God becomes man. It doesn't make any sense to me."

On Christmas Eve his wife and children went to church for the midnight service. He declined to accompany them. "I'd feel like a hypocrite," he explained. "I'd rather stay at home. But I'll wait up for you."

Shortly after his family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window and watched the flurries getting heavier and heavier. "If we must have Christmas," he thought, "it's nice to have a white one." He went back to his chair by the fireside and began to read his newspaper. A few minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. It was quickly followed by another, then another.

He thought that someone must be throwing snowballs at his living room window. When he went to the front



Will you accept this Special Invitation?

door to investigate, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the storm. They had been caught in the storm and in a desperate search for shelter had tried to fly through his window. "I can't let these poor creatures lie there and freeze," he thought. "But how can I help them?" Then he remembered the barn where the children's pony was stabled. It would provide a warm shelter.

He put on his coat and galoshes and tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the door wide and turned on a light. But the birds didn't come in. "Food will lure them in," he thought. So he hurried back to the house for bread crumbs, which he sprinkled on the snow to make a trail into the barn. To his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs and continued to flop around helplessly in the snow. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around and waving his arms. They scattered in every direction - except into the warm lighted barn.

"They find me a strange and terrifying creature," he said to himself, "and I can't seem to think of any way to let them know they can trust me. If only I could be a bird myself for a few minutes, perhaps I could lead them to safety ..."

1. Just at that moment the church bells began to ring. He stood silent for a while, listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. Then he sank to his knees in the snow. "Now I do understand," he whispered. "Now I see why You had to do it." "

Questions for reflection, discussion

1. Why did the father not go to the church to begin with?
2. What do the birds represent?
3. Why did the birds not follow him or the bread crumbs into the barn?
4. Does the story succeed in explaining the mystery and beauty of Christmas for you? Why or why not?



GUEST OF HONOR: Jesus Christ

DATE: Every day. Traditionally, December 25, but He's always around, so the date is flexible.

TIME: Whenever you're ready. Please don't be too late though, or you'll miss out on all the fun.

PLACE: In your heart. He'll meet you there-you'll hear Him knock.

ATTIRE: Come as you are. Grubbies are okay as He'll be washing our clothes anyway. He said something about new white robes and crowns for everyone who stays till the last.

TICKETS: Admission is free. He's already paid for everyone. He says you wouldn't have been able to afford it - it's cost Him everything He had!

REFRESHMENTS: New wine, bread, a supper that promises to be out of this world!!

GIFT SUGGESTIONS: Your heart. He's one of those people who already has everything else. (He's very generous in return though - just wait until you see what He has for you!

ENTERTAINMENT: Joy, Peace, Truth, Light, Life, Love, Real Happiness, Communion with God, Forgiveness, Miracles, Healing, Power, Eternity in Paradise.....and much more! (All rated "G" so bring your family and friends)

RSVP: Very Important! He must know ahead, so He can reserve a spot for you at the table. Also, he's keeping a list of His friends for future reference. He calls it the "Lamb's Book of Life."

PARTY GIVEN BY: His Kids. That's us! Hope To See You There! Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints) Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!

--Revelation 19:7-9

St. John Paul II Christmas Blessings

December 24, 1973 as Cardinal of Krakow

My dear ones, in a few moments I shall bless all of you who are sharing in this fraternal love feast, especially the university students who have gathered in such numbers on this occasion. However, before this blessing I want to express my best wishes to you.

*These wishes are prompted by the great divine mystery of Christmas, in which the Word became flesh. You have done well in preparing yourselves for Christmas here in this parish with your priests because only by turning our thoughts to God at this time can we understand the true value of each individual person without exception, beginning with ourselves. **There is no other yardstick for human value, greatness, and dignity. Therein lies the mystery of Christmas.** If we are able to read the depths of our souls and participate with our deepest sentiments, then on this Christmas Eve, in the light of the Christmas mystery each person truly takes on his own special value, illuminated by the light of the incarnate God, the God who became Man.*



*On Christmas Eve our thoughts go out to every person, seeking to reach them all, the disenfranchised, the abandoned, the persecuted, and even those who have brought such a condition on themselves. Christmas Eve has always meant the discovery of the true dimension of each and every person, of each and every one of our neighbors. **The Holy***

Child reveals to us the sanctity of the human person.

*Our wishes must therefore go out especially to the human person, to our neighbor as an individual. In our world, which is so marked by strong social bonds and increasing socialization, **the human person is more and more often becoming part of an anonymous mass.** This human anonymity must be illuminated by the mystery of the incarnate Word, by the God who became man, in order for the present moment to be seen in its full significance. These are my first wishes.*

*My second wish is also inspired by the Christmas mystery. **The Son of God, the Son of the Father, is born. He reveals the interior life of God who is three and one.** The*

*Son of God becomes man as the Son of Mary. **He becomes part of the human family and thus enables us all to share in his divine sonship.** He is the brother of all, and through him the new human family comes into being. In no other way could people have been united or universal brotherhood brought about, since this is possible only through the support of the one Father, who is Father without any distinction between language, culture, or race or between poor or rich or between social, economic, or political class or system. **One single Father and one single family.***

*Christmas is seen as a **family festival**, and today's gathering is imbued with this spirit. The bread that you receive here and that you will take back home is for the family, for your families, parents, children, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends, in fact everybody who is gathered together with you in your home. It is for those families who are experiencing some crisis or are in some type of difficulty; for divided families; for families where the father or mother is missing and where the remaining parent must assume sole responsibility for the children. Christmas is a great night for all of them, a light that speaks to us of God the Father who wants to see people create a harmonious family community*

*These thoughts are meant especially for the families to whom you owe your lives and to whom you return during this holiday period. However, it has a wider meaning, for you have grown up and are moving into the future, in which, in accordance with the laws of life, you will soon create families of your own. **In the perspective of Christmas, what else could we wish you but that you should form strong families and be deeply united in that love which binds two people together indissolubly for the whole of life?** I hope that you will be able to give love a truly human and divine dimension, thus fulfilling its highest potential. **Love, marriage, and the family are the most fundamentally important elements in the life of human society and in that of any country.***

While sharing this bread with you on this holy eve, I give you my wishes for the formation of real, healthy families. With this end in view, do not grudge your time, do not spare your prayer and your attention, and do not shirk any responsibilities or sacrifices. Marriage is a very great state of life, and I therefore hope that you will not waste it.

I have prayed with you around the altar tonight for these intentions. We have of course prayed for your studies and examinations and for your professional careers, but, my dear ones, the vocation to marriage and the family is the most crucial one. Like the priestly vocation, it is strictly personal in that one finds one's own self and one's true value as a person



in it. **The greatness of the family lies in its primary orientation towards the person, and this is why whoever marries and forms a family must be mature. I wish that maturity for all of you.**

I also wish that you may overflow with humanity, that special and greatest of human gifts that is more important than intellectual ability, learning, art, or skill. I wish that you may have this treasure and that it may grow within you and spread out to others.

You are gathered here together representing our university city, and I imagine you living in its buildings, in those beautifully illuminated rooms I have passed by so many times and thought of you living in them. I meet you when I come to the church of Nowa Wies at the beginning of the year or before Advent or during Lent.

What more do I wish for you? **I wish that you may spread the good that you have within you throughout your homes and rooms.**

Today in this world that is being more and more laicized, every Christian has a great mission. **It is a world in which people are trying to impose atheism and move away from God without considering what they are losing or what priceless treasure is being buried, a world in which people are moving blindly, unaware of the cost, in the opposite direction from that of man's eternal destiny.** Each Christian, with his heritage of faith, grace, hope, love, and vocation, must spread this treasure.

The windows of the university complex and the nearby streets are lit up. **May your hearts and your young personalities shine forth in the same way, radiating this light.** We must strive to make the atmosphere of these buildings both Christian and human. You have a great mission - and I am not afraid to use this word.

My dear ones, I wish you full human maturity. May you be

true, conscious Christians, leaven in the midst of all those who live with you, so that they do not give up in advance or suffer frustration, because you are with them, you who break bread with me and have shared the body of Christ with me.

My dear ones, accept these wishes. Accept the truth they bring you - a Polish truth, rich in our Christmas tradition and deeply Christian.

Now I want to bless this special bread and each of you who hold it in your hands. Break it and share it with one another and with me and your priests and with your families at home. In this way we give new life to the ancient Polish vigil tradition in which at suppertime the father took the bread and blessed it and his family. In my position as father and priest, I bless this bread, and you and all those with whom you will share it. **Go out and proclaim the good news of Christmas.**

24 December 1973

Part C

Lesson A

Title - Christmas Journal Writing Ideas

Subject - Language Arts

Grade Level - 3-5

Materials: chalkboard; chalk; paper and pencils or journals; crayons; scissors; assorted construction paper

Directions: Print one or more of these ideas on the board and let the students complete the activity.

1. List four things you could do to help someone at Christmas time. Draw a picture of what you will do.
2. Choose your favourite Christmas recipe, then write down all the ingredients and the directions on how to make it.
3. Ask a relative to share his/her memories of Christmas, especially their favourite games.
4. Write a letter to Santa. Tell him what you want and why you think you deserve it.
5. Write a letter to the Grinch and tell him why he should get the Christmas spirit.



Lesson B

Title - Partner Christmas Story

By - Ginny Jones

Primary Subject - Language Arts

Grade Level - 5-8

Divide students into pairs. Each person is responsible for 2-3 fully developed paragraphs. (6 sentences minimum) Use descriptive details and action verbs.

Each new paragraph must have a connecting phrase (transition) that ties it to the preceding paragraph.

Possible story topics:

1. You went to bed Christmas Eve 2014 and woke up Christmas Day 2050.
2. Christmas is here and you just won the lottery.
3. Christmas has been cancelled this year.
4. Spending Christmas in another country.
5. The Christmas dinner to remember.
6. Acts of charity on Christmas Eve.
7. You were one of the shepherds on the first Christmas.
8. You were one of the Magi searching for the baby Jesus.



Lesson C

Title – Christmas Wishing Tree

By – Diana Cohen

Primary Subject – Art

Grade Level – K-2

1. Using green paper or card, have students trace around the outline of their hand. This is best done working in pairs, so one student can trace the other's hand and the other can hold their hand very still.
2. Cut out the hands. Students with good fine motor control can do this themselves.
3. Holding their handprint so that the fingers point downwards, ask each student to write two Christmas wishes on their hand. They can write their own wish, and one for a friend or family member. (Perhaps it could also be suggested that one wish might be a prayerful or spiritual wish, nothing to do with getting another material gift.)
4. Using glitter, paints or whatever is available, decorate the hands, being careful not to cover the written wishes.
5. Collect all the handprints and, on a separate large piece of card, arrange the hands into the shape of a Christmas tree and fix with staples or glue. Ensure the fingers all point downwards. The fingers look like branches and leaves and the finished "wish tree" looks fantastic. Kids will love reading each other's wishes.

Where possible, use a combination of light and dark green hands.



Lessons for Elementary Grades

There are many sites on the internet that present ready-made theme lessons and ideas. One such site rich with lesson ideas especially for primary and junior grades is <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/Christmas.htm> The following four lessons are inspired by that site.

Part D

Quizzes and Puzzles

Over time there has been an accretion of popular traditions in music and song associated with the feast of Christmas. Without giving in to the strictly secular spirit of the season, it is true to say that much of the lore reflects the religious roots of our celebration.

Here we are including a few fun quizzes which we hope will help to stir a nostalgic feeling of tender Christmases past, celebrated with family and friends.

Quiz #1 Complete the Lines

Wassailing isn't engaged in as much as yesteryear. It may become a lost tradition. That would be a terrible loss. To jog your memory, here is a little exercise of sorts. Let's see how well you know these Christmas songs and carols. For each song you are given one or two lines. You provide the next two lines of the song.

- a.) Angels we have heard on high,
Singing sweetly through the night,
- b.) Away in a manger,
no crib for His bed,
- c.) They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far,
- d.) Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King!
- e.) It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
- f.) What child is this,
who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap, is sleeping?
- g.) I'll be home for
Christmas;
You can plan on me.
- h.) Silver bells, silver bells
It's Christmas time in the city
- i.) Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child



- j.) Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
- k.) Jesu, joy of man's desiring,
Holy wisdom, love most bright.

Then again, we hear the songs all around us and many times. But do we listen to the words? Do we recognize the words? Are we familiar with the actions described in the songs? Test yourself with these favorites.

Quiz #2 More Favourites

1. What did the baby Jesus do when the little drummer boy played his drum for Him?
 - a) clapped His hands and stomped his feet
 - b) smiled at him and cooed
 - c) winked at him repeatedly
 - d) closed His eyes and fell asleep
2. In the song *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, who is told to sing?
 - a) choirs of angels,
 - b) shepherds of Bethlehem
 - c) citizens of Judea
 - d) Roman soldiers
3. In the song *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus* where did the child see mommy tickle Santa?
 - a) Underneath his beard so snowy white
 - b) Underneath his cheery chin
 - c) Underneath the mistletoe
 - d) Underneath the glowing candle
4. In the song *Jingle Bell Rock* where did the people dance and prance?
 - a) in jingle bell square
 - b) in the frozen meadow
 - c) in the railway car
 - d) in the town theatre

5. In the same song what do Janice and Jen hope for?

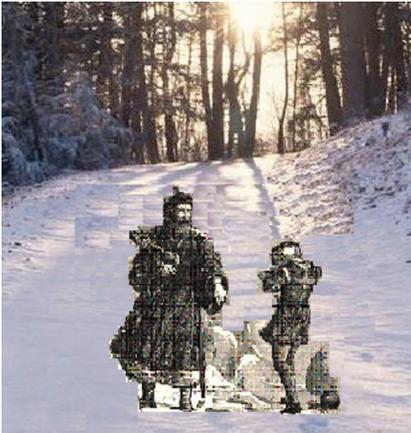
- a) toys that will last
- b) dolls that will talk
- c) snazzy clothes
- d) CD'S that don't break

6. In *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* what did the other reindeer do to him?

- a) painted his very shiny nose,
- b) made his nose glow
- c) laughed at him and called him names
- d) invited him to all the reindeer games.

7. In the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas* what did the true love give to her on the seventh day?

- a) calling birds
- b) golden rings
- c) geese a-laying
- d) swans a-swimming



8. When *Good King Wenceslas* looked out on the feast of Stephen....

- a) the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.
- b) dimly shone the moon that night, though the frost was cruel,
- c) a poor woman came in sight, gathering

winter fuel.

- d) a peasant ventured forth from his dwelling

9. In the song *Here Comes Santa Claus* what are the children told to do

- a) put their shoes by the chimney
- b) say their prayers
- c) jump out of bed
- d) ring, ring the bells

10. In *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* what do the singers ask for?

- a) a happy New Year.
- b) some figgy pudding
- c) a cup of good wine



- d) roasted chestnuts

Quiz #3 A Bit of History and Tradition

1. The first printed reference to Christmas trees appeared in

- a) Germany in 1531
- b) Norway in 1234
- c) Denmark in 1767
- d) Russia in 1848

2. Which name does not belong to one of Santa's reindeer?

- a) Pretzel
- b) Donder
- c) Blitzen
- d) Comet

3. The crib (creche) or nativity scene was first popularized by

- a) St. Bonaventure in 1197
- b) St. Thomas of Aquinas in 1234
- c) St. Bernard of Clairvaux in 1110
- d) St. Francis of Assisi in 1223

4. In *The Nutcracker* ballet the enemy of the nutcracker is

- a) the Tin Soldier
- b) the Elephant Tamer
- c) the King of the Mice
- d) the Queen's Musketeer

5. A boar's head is a traditional Christmas dish. According to a popular story, the unlucky boar whose head began the custom in the Middle Ages was killed by:

- a) the Sheriff of Nottingham
- b) Choking to death on a book of Greek philosophy
- c) an errant arrow shot by Robin Hood
- d) Tom the Taylor

6. Who was the author of *A Christmas Carol*?

- a) Dorothy Sayers
- b) James Joyce
- c) Hans Christian Andersen
- d) Charles Dickens

7. Which popular Christmas song was actually written for Thanksgiving?

- a) Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer
- b) Jingle Bells
- c) Winter Wonderland
- d) Chestnuts Roasting

8. A favorite Christmas story is Dylan Thomas' A Child's Christmas in...

- a) Ohio
- b) Quebec
- c) Wales
- d) Queensland

9. The poem commonly known as *The Night Before Christmas* was originally titled:

- a) The Night Visitor
- b) A Visit From Saint Nicholas
- c) Santa Comes to Town
- d) You'd Better Watch Out

10. "Hot cockles" was popular at Christmas in medieval times. It was:

- a) a hot spicy drink
- b) a branded meat dish
- c) a game in which a blindfolded person was struck
- d) a toast offered to damsels

ANSWERS

Quiz #1

- a.) And the mountains in reply
Echoing their brave delight.
- b.) The little Lord Jesus
lay down his sweet head.
- c.) And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.

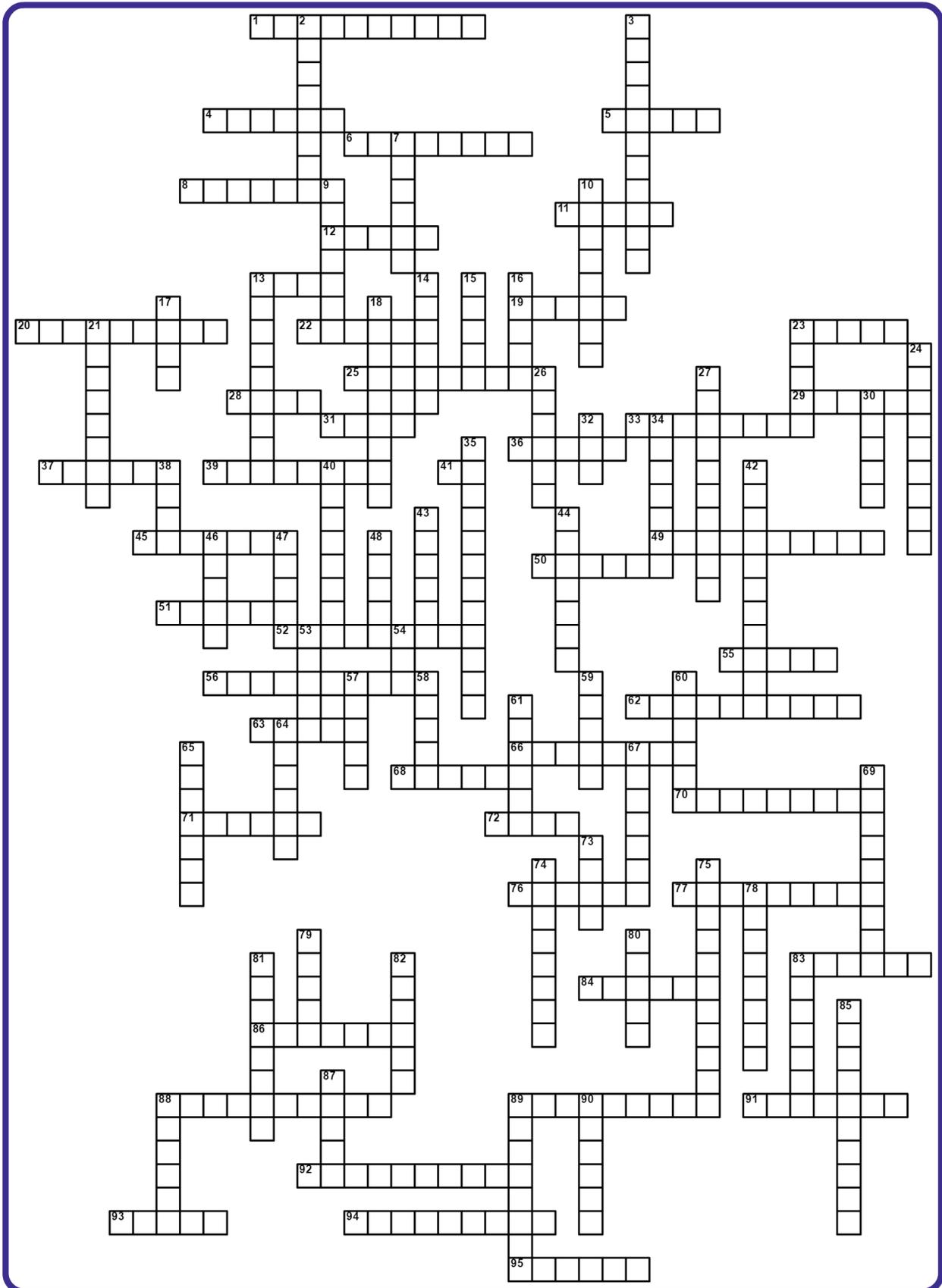
- d.) Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
- e.) From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
- f.) Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
- g.) Please have snow and mistletoe
And presents on the tree.
- h.) Ding a ling, Hear them ring
Soon it will be Christmas Day
- i.) Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
- j.) Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
- k.) Drawn by Thee, our souls aspiring,
Soar to uncreated light.

Quiz #2 1. b) 2. a) 3. a) 4. c) 5. b) 6. c) 7. d) 8. a) 9. b) 10. b)

Quiz #3 1. a) 2. a) 3. d) 4. c) 5. b) 6. d) 7. b) 8. c) 9. b) 10. c)



Christmas Crossword Puzzle



Clues start on next page

Christmas Crossword Puzzle

Across:

- 1 the oldest Greek version of the Old Testament
- 4 brother of Cephas
- 5 mode of transportation of the Italian Befana
- 6 revelation of the reality or essential meaning of something
- 8 made announcement to Mary
- 11 cross in French
- 12 type of song attributed to David
- 13 site of the first public miracle by Jesus
- 19 radiant energy visible to the human eye
- 20 first weekday after Christmas (two words)
- 22 period of prayerful anticipation
- 23 Cyrenean man forced to help carry cross for Jesus
- 25 one of two partisan groups in Israel
- 28 period of fasting before Easter
- 29 queen who saved her people in Babylon
- 31 "The first ____ the angel did say..."
- 33 what children look for under the tree
- 36 Spanish for happy
- 37 circle of leaves worn as sign of honour
- 39 one of the 70 sent forth by Christ
- 41 eleven to Augustus
- 45 one of the twelve chosen ones
- 49 a showy Mexican flowering plant
- 50 Dr. Seuss character who tried to steal Christmas
- 51 sound made by sleigh bells
- 52 first to receive the news of the Nativity
- 55 a jeweled headband
- 56 shell-breaking device, also a ballet
- 62 prolific writer of Father Brown mysteries
- 63 fragrant tree native to Lebanon
- 66 "Gloria in _____".
- 68 aggregations of woolly animals
- 70 soft piece of frozen water that falls from the sky
- 71 an animal trough
- 72 to array the spacious corridors
- 76 won chariot race, (two words)
- 77 roasted around yuletide
- 83 got haircut by Delilah

Down:

- 2 one of the cardinal virtues
- 3 God made flesh
- 7 silvery strip of plastic decorating a tree
- 9 Home of reindeers
- 10 last name of Ebenezer's clerk
- 13 the fortieth day after Christmas
- 14 known as the "Lily of the Mohawks"
- 15 piece of folded paper with printed message, holiday greeting
- 16 branch brought back to Noah
- 17 the first male parent
- 18 birthplace of Jesus
- 21 Isaiah's name for Jesus the Messiah
- 23 What Dutch children leave by the fireplace for Sinterklaas
- 24 bird in the pear tree
- 26 a devout man who saw the infant Jesus
- 27 the practice of going door to door singing Christmas songs
- 30 bush with dark green leaves and red berries
- 32 tree cursed in the New Testament
- 34 most famous reindeer
- 35 surgery undergone by baby Jesus
- 38 heavenly instrument
- 40 a cardinal candidate favoured to be pope
- 42 emperor son of St. Helena
- 43 the instrument that replaced the organ for first Silent Night
- 44 a decorative ring made of leavers or flowers
- 46 weapon used by David against Goliath
- 47 mythical helpers of the mythical man in bright red
- 48 a gift of aromatic gum resin
- 53 interviewed the Magi
- 54 period preceding an event
- 57 a song of joy
- 58 "Ónce in ____ Davids City"
- 59 ruminant quadrupeds carrying wise men
- 60 a general official count of the population
- 61 "_____ fideles"
- 64 "Ton histoire est une _____."

Clues continued on next page

Across:

- 84 number of tribes of Israel
- 86 city where Mary lived out her earthly life
- 88 September 29 is his feast day
- 89 special Italian bread loaf served at Christmas
- 91 Jesuit wrote first Canadian carol
- 92 A product sold by Campaign Life
- 93 temporary refuge for the Holy Family
- 94 a person who stands in for the parent at Baptism
- 95 the animal that carried Mary to the inn

Down:

- 65 Scottish name for New Year
- 67 the person who saved us from sin
- 69 king who searched for winter fuel
- 73 wrote Book of Revelation
- 74 dried Jesus face on way to Calvary
- 75 Crowned as Holy Roman Emperor, Christmas day 800 A.D.
- 78 tree climbed by Zaccheus
- 79 the Pentateuch
- 80 the means by which Joseph was warned to leave Israel
- 81 exclamation praising God
- 82 Name of the mythical snowman of songs
- 83 visited by three ghosts
- 85 German for Christmas fir tree
- 87 "A _____ of angels sang"
- 88 "_____ Vechir" (Holy Evening, Christmas Eve) in Ukraine
- 89 piece of broken pottery
- 90 popular yuletide drink

Solution on next page



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Christmas Crossword Solution

