

Santa Claus Letters FROM THE BOYS

Dear Boys:

Really I'm quite proud this year of the way you boys answered my request for letters. You did a whole lot better than last year. In fact, you sent so many fine letters that I wished I had more prizes.

I sorted and read and resorted your letters, trying to pick out the one to win the hockey stick and pads and puck. Bless my soul, if I could decide, but I had to finally, and Jamie Lamb is the winner.

But I'm asking The Free Press to publish five other letters from boys, and if you boys whose letters are published will call at The Free Press to-morrow you will each receive a beautiful Christmas box of candy, with a picture of myself on it.

I want to thank you all for writing such nice letters and especially those boys who weren't too greedy for themselves, but remembered the Christmas spirit and thought of other folks who weren't so fortunate. I've kept all your letters and noted their contents and I'll do my best to remember you all on Christmas.

Your old friend, SANTA CLAUS.

Acton, Ontario, December 8th, 1934

Dear Santa:

I wish to thank you for the lovely gifts that you gave me last year, and for which I was so much happier. I hope you and your jolly little helpers and elves are feeling as well as possible.

After you have presented the other young children with their gifts, I should like you to come to my house and give my brothers and sisters and me our presents.

After you have come down the chimney and entered the sitting room, you will find a lunch on the table that Mother and I prepared for you.

At the fireplace you will find a stocking hanging up and I hope you will miss the odd hole in it, and by the lunch will be a note, expressing my wish for a bob-sleigh, an electric train and a few popcorn bags, and some candy, and also a carpenter set, with which I would like to make a birdhouse.

So good-bye for now, for Mother is getting anxious as it is my bed-time, and she would like to tuck me in. Don't forget your lunch and the other dear children.

Yours lovingly, JAMIE LAMB.

Georgetown, Ont., December 7th, 1934

Dear Santa:

Just a few lines to tell you I am looking forward to Christmas. I am anxious to see you again, and I suppose you will be glad to get back to Acton again.

When you come on Christmas night you will find a hot drink of coffee and a piece of Christmas cake on the table, and I am leaving some hay and oats for your reindeer.

Santa, will you please bring me a bicycle this year, and some candy and oranges. I will not ask for any more, for I know there are millions of little boys who have to visit, and it would be greedy of me to ask for more than my share.

I have been a good boy this year, and I hope you will not forget me.

Well, I must say good-bye until next year. Wishing you a safe journey, and hoping you will have a Merry Christmas. I remain,

Your friend, LAWRENCE CROSBY.

Rockwood, No. 2, December 8th, 1934

Santa Claus Dear Friend:

We have been taking The Free Press for years and have always looked forward to the day we get it, as we always enjoy looking it over.

In reading it this week I noticed our good old friend's picture. Santa Claus, he was telling the boys and girls to write to him. So I thought I would take the opportunity of writing him a short letter.

I hope you will be able to come to see us this year, also visit all the children everywhere, as I know every child would be very much disappointed if their dear old friend, Santa Claus, was not able to call on them. I will be pleased with anything this year, as I know money is scarce, and it is hard to get a whole lot for everybody. I have two sisters and six brothers. I hope they will get something, if it is ever so little, also Mother and Dad.

Hoping my letter is not too long, and wishing you every success for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours truly, KARL FRANK.

Acton, Ont., December 7th, 1934

Dear Santa Claus:

In last week's Free Press I read that you would like to get letters from the boys and girls of Acton and I am pleased to write to you.

Some boys tell me there is no Santa Claus, but I know there is. I have written to you ever since I learned to write.

I am only eight years old. How does it feel to be two thousand years old, and

CHRISTMAS BABIES

A child born during Christmas tide, lasting from Christmas Day until New Year's Day, will always be lucky, but it must always be pricked with a holly leaf on the right leg. If it be a boy, and on the left leg if it is a girl. Should snow be on the ground at the time of its birth, the infant should be rolled in it before it is six hours old, according to ancient superstition.

This custom of rolling a newly-born child in the snow was carried out by the old midwives until quite recently. In many places it is said this risky practice is indulged in surreptitiously to-day.

A lover on Christmas morning should walk to the house of his betrothed and, if the snow is on the ground, throw a snowball at her window. If there be no snow, a small pebble also ensure happiness and possibly marriage during the year.

There is a general superstition that if a girl sits on a table she will never be married. But Christmas Day is an exception! If she should be desirous of attracting the attention of a man in the room on that day, she should sit on a table and thus secure his admiration. If the bait is taken, the fish will be landed before the twenty-first of June.

ANCIENTS GAVE PRESENTS

The custom of making presents a Christmas is derived from very ancient usage. It was a domestic invention. In Latin countries gifts were exchanged at New Year's writes James Waldo Fawcett in the Washington (D. C.) Evening Star.

The decoration of churches with mistletoe and holly is likewise a pagan survival.

Nativity plays and pageants trace back to a pre-Christian era. The sports of the Lords of Misrule in England are supposed to be an inheritance from the Saturnalia of heathen Rome. Father Christmas or Santa Claus is identified with St. Nicholas or Nicolas, and also with Knecht Rupercht and Robin Goodfellow. Grimm says that in some parts of Germany, Knecht Nicolas is merely an attendant on the real gift-giver, who is sometimes the infant Christ and sometimes Dame Bertha, but who is also frequently conceived as an ugly dwarf, called Krampeus.

Carol singing by wails, strolling street musicians, is an old British custom. The first Christmas cards date from about 1846.

The setting up in Latin churches of a Christmas creche is said to have been originated by St. Francis.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16th

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Golden Text.—For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.—1 Cor.—11:26.

Time.—Written to the Corinthians from Philippi, about 56-58, A. D. Exposition.—I. Paul's Account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

The Apostle Paul received directly from the Lord by special revelation the truth about the Lord's Supper (v. 23; cf. Gal. 1:12; Acts 22:17, 18; 2 Cor. 12:1-4). How important the Lord Himself must regard the Lord's Supper to make it the subject of a special revelation when the fact of its institution was already known by the apostles who were present. The time in which Jesus instituted the Supper, "the same night in which He was betrayed," gives it a tender interest. There is something remarkably touching in His "giving thanks" over that bread and wine that spoke of His own death! He was giving thanks for His own atoning agony and death. The bread represented His body that was the next day to be given on the Cross for them. As in the Old Testament sacrifices those who offered them ate of them to set forth in a figure their appropriation to themselves of the benefits of the death of the animal, so we eat the bread to set forth our appropriation to ourselves by faith of the atoning benefits of the death of Christ. We do it all "in remembrance of" Him. Christ was leaving them. He knew human hearts and how readily we forget, and He would have us remember Him, and especially His atoning death, the supreme manifestation of His love. The Lord's Supper is a keepsake, like a ring that the lover puts upon the finger of her true love, that whenever she looks at it in his absence she may remember him. The Old Testament sacrifices brought sin to remembrance, the Lord's Supper brings Jesus to remembrance, and the perfect atonement He has made for sin once for all. The Revised Version properly omits the word "broken" from v. 24; the body of Jesus was not broken (John 19:32, 33, 36); it was "given" for us (Luke 22:19). The bread is broken in the Lord's Supper simply that it may be distributed, but we each partake of the whole, unbroken, Christ. The cup "is the new covenant in His blood." It is as if it were the parchment upon which the New Covenant of pardon through atoning blood is written. We read this covenant when we look into the cup. The wine tells us that the covenant is dedicated with the blood of Jesus (Heb. 9:18-26, R. V.). However, often we drink this cup, and the clear implication is that we should drink it often, we should do it in remembrance of Jesus. How the living Lord desired to be constantly remembered by His people! In eating the bread and drinking the cup we are proclaiming the Lord's death. We should keep it up "till He comes." Then we will no longer need the memorial, for we will have Himself. The Lord's Supper looks back to the Cross and forward to the Second Coming; it is both a memorial and a prophecy. It is also the vehicle through which we actually feed on our Lord. It is a very solemn feast, and it is a grievous sin to partake of it thoughtlessly, losing sight of its deep significance, and making it a mere form (v. 27). Eating "unworthily" does not mean in personal unworthiness of its blessing, but in an unworthy manner, that is thoughtlessly, "not discerning the Lord's body" that is therein set forth. Whoever does partake of it "unworthily" is "guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (v. 29), i. e., we share in the guilt of His death for we have made a mockery of that solemn ceremony that sets it forth (cf. Heb. 6:6-10, 29). How awful is the thoughtlessness with which many professed Christians approach the Lord's Supper. Always examine yourself, ask yourself, "Do I realize that this sets forth my Lord's death in His place?" and so partake, eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Heedless partaking of the communion in Corinth, not being occupied with the Lord and His body, but with their own tastes and appetite, had wrought terrible effects: some were sick and some were dead (v. 30). Why should we not believe that similar effects of thoughtless partaking of the Communion follow in our churches to-day? Indeed, the statement that such careless and thoughtless participation in this holy ordinance is prevalent, among us, cannot be construed into unwarranted criticism. Members of churches whose practice it is to attend public worship almost from force of habit, bring the same indifference and careless attitude of mind to the Lord's Table. It is a most serious lapse from Christian duty so to do, and the Apostle is not backward in setting forth the danger and condemnation in which those who are guilty of it, place themselves. Let us see to it that the sin be not justly laid to our charge.

II. The "Real Presence." There has been endless discussion over the force of the word "is" in the clause "this is my body." Does it mean that as Jesus blessed the bread it became the actual physical body of Christ? Or does it mean, this bread represents my body, and just as you eat this bread and it becomes part of you, so you are to eat Me and I will become of you? One can find help to an answer to this question

in Ezek. 5:4, 5; 1 Cor. 10:4, 16; 11:25; Ezek. 37:11; Matt. 13:28; Luke 12:1; John 10:7; Rev. 1:20; Gal. 4:25. But after all has been said, there is doubtless a real presence of Christ in the elements, and when we do partake of them, "discerning the Lord's body," there is a real feeding upon Christ, so that just as the bread we eat becomes part of us, so He Himself becomes part of us. On the other hand, if we partake in an unworthy manner, as a mere form, not thinking what we do, "not discerning the Lord's body," we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and we eat and drink judgment to ourselves (1 Cor. 11:27, 29; Rev. 12:11; 1:5; 7:9, 14; Cor. 5:7; comp. with Ex. 12:13). There can be no forgiveness except on the ground of that shed blood. There are many in this day who sneer at the doctrine of atonement by shed blood as "a sanguinary theology" or "a theology of the shambles." But a Christianity without atoning blood is a Christianity without remission of sins or peace of conscience. That Last Supper closed with a hymn (probably Ps. 118). How this fact hallowed sacred song and gives our souls to rejoice in its exercise! (It will be noted that Matthew's account of the Last Supper has been added to the selected Lesson-Scripture.)

EATING A CHURCH

The good old-fashioned Christmas produces hearty appetites — and not only among human beings.

One of the strangest items of Yuletide news comes from an Alpine village, where, it was reported, thousands of famished rats had "invaded a garage and devoured a motor-car, leaving only the iron frame-work."

But the record for strange meals is surely held by the dogs who ate a church. Somewhere in the North, pious Eskimos built a church with a frame of walrus ribs, covered with walrus hides.

It was a nice church, but, between morning and evening service on Sunday it was torn to pieces and devoured by a pack of hungry dogs.

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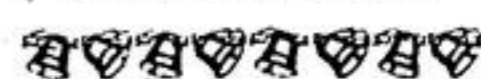
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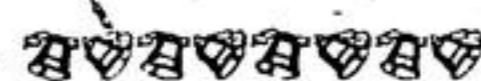
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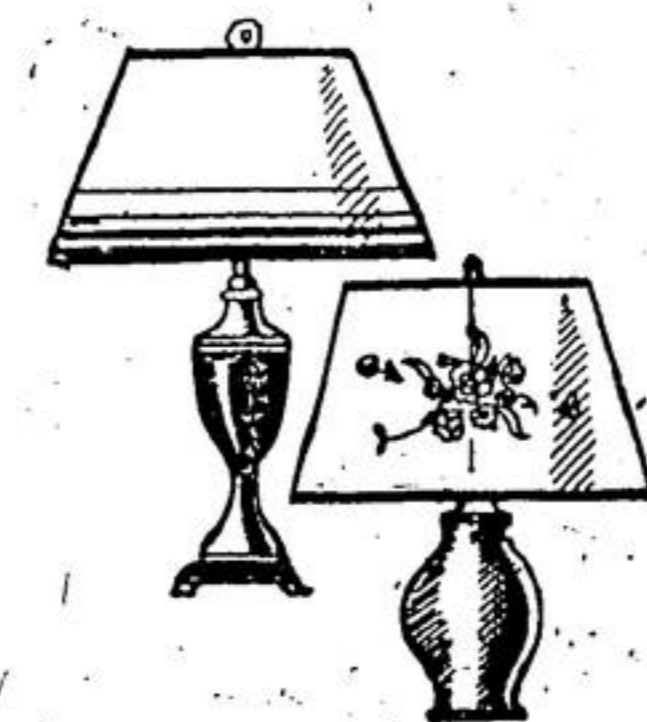


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