

What is Christmas really about?

What is Christmas? It is the glorified holiday that children look forward to every year. Their favorite holiday, of course. How many other days out of the year do they get bombarded with gifts? Christmas is a definite learning experience for kids. They learn what it means to be greedy.

We celebrate Christmas in tribute to the birth of Jesus Christ. Apparently, no one knows the exact date of His birthdate, but most Christians observe December 25 at Christmas Day.

During the season we celebrate by decorating our homes and places of business with holly, mistletoe and the famous Christmas tree.

The word Christmas comes from "Christes mass", an early English phrase that means "mass of Christ".

The story of Christmas is derived from the gospels of Saint Luke and Saint Matthew in the New Testament.

According to Luke, an angel appeared and told shepherds near the town

of Bethlehem of the miraculous birth of Christ.

Matthew told how the three wise men, or "Magi" were lead to this savior by a bright star.

KNOWN CELEBRATIONS

The first known celebration of Christmas occurred in 336 A.D. This is according to an early Roman calendar. It was celebrated on December 25.

In the late 300's Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire. By 1100 Christmas became the most important religious festival in Europe.

During this time Saint Nicholas became a symbol of gift-giving in many European countries.

In 1500 Protestantism was born. During this time many Christians began to feel that Christmas included non-religious customs.

In the 1600's Christmas was outlawed in England and in parts of the English Colonies in America because of these feelings.

Despite the outlawing of it, people continued to exchange gifts regard-

less. In the 1800's two more customs evolved and became popular: decorating Christmas trees and sending greeting cards to friends and relatives.

In Spain people dance in the streets after midnight.

"Silent Night" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" were composed during this time.

In countries including the United States Santa Claus replaced Saint Nicholas as the symbol of gift giving.

The Christmas tradition became important to different businesses for economic reasons.

SELL TREES

Today companies manufacture Christmas decorations and sell trees for the occasion. Many places hire extra help for the Christmas rush.

People celebrate Christmas all over the world.

In Spain, for example, people dance in the streets after Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. Most Spanish homes display a Nativity scene

called a Nacimiento.

On January 5 the children of Spain put their shoes near a window or on a balcony. The following day is Epiphany which is the last day of their Christ-

mas season. This day celebrates the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus.

According to the Spanish tradition, the wise men visit each home and distribute gifts to all the children in their shoes.

In Poland the people attend "Pasterka". This means the "Shepherd's Mass". They then follow the Christmas tradition by breaking an "oplakek" which is a thin layer of wafer made of wheat flour and water. Nativity scenes are stamped on the oplakek.

The head of the family holds the wafer and each person then eats a small piece of it. The Christmas dinner consists of fish, sauerkraut, potato pancakes and beet soup.

So every different cul-

ture has its own way of celebrating Christmas, with one thing in common, Christ's birthday.

HUMBLE

In some cultures it is a very humble celebration. In the United States and Canada, however, it is quite the opposite.

Around Christmas time every year, people basically shop in department stores while toy manufacturers work all day and reap in the anticipated millions.

This generation of children has grown up receiving toys by the truckload for Christmas. How many of these kids understand why they are being loaded with all of these wonderful gifts?

When you mention Christmas to a child today the first vision that may pop into his head will be a new Barbie doll or Darth Vader toy. It might not be that holy wonder in Bethlehem so many centuries ago.

Recycle this newspaper! To find out how, call: The Ontario Recycling Information Service, 1-800-387-2617.

EXTENDED GOLD SALE

WE HAVE EXTENDED OUR GOLD SALE TO 5 PM SAT. NOV. 30, 1985

10K GOLD CHAIN	\$100
FROM PER INCH	
10K & 14K EARRINGS HEAVY CHAINS BANGLES PEARLS	50% OFF
10K GOLD CHARMS HANG-ONS ZODIACS PENDANTS CROSSES	50% OFF
SALE OF GOLD MANUFACTURERS CONSIGNED STOCK ENDS JUNE 29, 5:00 P.M. DON'T MISS IT!	

John Boughton Jewellers
DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN
877-4313

For all the good things that make your Christmas delicious, think of us.

MINCEMEAT PIE FILLING	GLAZED MIXED FRUIT
99¢	93¢

WATCH FOR WEEKLY SPECIALS ON GLAZED FRUIT, NUTS & OTHER CHRISTMAS BAKING ESSENTIALS

Foodstuffs
92 Main St. S., Georgetown 877-6598

I just had my red suit delivered by "North Star's" **FREE** pickup & delivery service.

Why don't you phone **877-0469** for your free pickup and delivery?

15% off all dry cleaning orders

re-usable expires Dec. 31, 85 over the counter orders only

Same day service Mon. - Sat. (if in by noon)

Repairs & Alterations
Wholesale & Retail
Specialty & Leather Services

NORTH STAR DRY CLEANERS

55 Main St. S.
Downtown Georgetown
877-0469