

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## It's the reason for the season

Believe it or not, by the time The New Tanner is distributed on Thursday, there will only be four days until the Eve of Christmas and a celebration we've been anticipating for weeks – Christmas Day.

Although some of the media, in all its forms, try to obscure the reason why Christmas is so widely celebrated around the world, the reason for the season, as the saying says, is the birth of Jesus Christ. We are fascinated, or should we say saddened, by the efforts of those who do their best to change the meaning of Christmas, or to denigrate it in any way they can.

Christmas is a time for joy, celebrating the birth of One whom Christians believe is the Son of God.

Long before political correctness, Christmas was also a celebration of peace on earth and goodwill to men. It spilled over from the churches into homes, the streets, the shops and schools. The joy, the sense of peace and goodwill was pervasive. It had no religious boundaries.

There were no "holiday" trees, "happy holiday" greetings and few attempts to play down its real meaning. As one editorialist wrote recently, "In one sense, this symbolic cleansing of Christmas is little more than an exercise in hypocrisy. Politically correct euphemisms and ribbons of turquoise and magenta instead of the traditional green and red don't really conceal the obvious rationale for closing schools, stores, banks and factories celebrating Dec. 25.

"And in another sense, taking Christ out of Christmas is a denial of the tolerance, diversity and inclusiveness in which Canadians take so much pride.

"In welcoming people from far-off lands to this country and encouraging them to preserve their traditions and cherish their beliefs, the Christian majority in Canada has shown a profound respect for others, a generosity of spirit and a measure of tolerance that's an example for the entire world. It's hard to imagine that anyone would work to deny Christians their Christmas traditions just because they are the majority." But...

Canadians have shown a remarkable tolerance and respect for other cultures and religions, and also joined in celebrating their festivities in a spirit of goodwill. In return we would expect a similar spirit for Christmas, not as others would like to transform it into a meaningless holiday and instead of a holy day, the original meaning of the word. After all, what's there to celebrate? – the arrival of snow, the winter solstice or some other name such as 'Festus'?"

In our attempts not to offend anyone in our now most diverse society, we could lose the real spirit of Christmas which includes goodwill and much joy to everyone of all faiths and cultures and extends beyond that to those who have none. If we ever lose it as a nation then we'll be dispensing with the most joyous time of the year for a mess of meaningless trivia.

Fortunately, Canadians are starting to wake up and fight back at those who would destroy the foundation of our Christian culture and belief. The churches of Acton are actively promoting the "Keep Christ in Christmas" theme with signs and billboards to let the revisionists know that Christmas, as we know it, is still very much alive. It will take more than "holiday" trees, "happy holiday" greetings and other superficial swipes at the meaning of Christmas to replace the spirit of goodwill and peace that pervades the traditional Christmas.

In that spirit the publisher and staff at The New Tanner wish everyone A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!



And they saw a star in the East showing where the Babe was born.

## Is Christmas just retail, retail, retail?

Christmas: There is a lot to be said about Christmas. For many, it is time for family, friends and of course, there is the religious aspect of it if you wish. However, for more than less, it seems to boil down to retail, retail, retail.

In a way, I feel like I'm sounding like fellow New Tanner columnist Mike O'Leary. Every time I hear the one restaurant commercial on the radio about the "Festive Special" I want to cringe. My "festive" mood turns sour and I feel my teeth clenching. Sure there are lots of other religions and celebrations, but what is wrong with Christmas? Are they just trying to mass market their special to every religion or celebration by eliminating the "Christmas Special?"

About two weeks ago, I had to call our insurance agent. The receptionist floored me with her greeting. "Merry Christmas..." she answered the phone. I was so pleased that someone wasn't politically correct I told her boss how nice it was to hear it.

This past weekend, I had no choice but to enter the land of retail seasonal hell. I put off Christmas shopping long enough. I could no longer avoid leaving Acton for the



By  
Angela Tyler

land of shopping malls. I had purchased as much as I could in town, yet there were some things I had to buy elsewhere.

I felt my life being sucked out of me as soon as I opened the door to the mall. I tried to be optimistic with Christmas carols playing through the P.A. system and the decorations throughout, but my pessimism soon returned as I stood in the endless line in one of the bigger department stores.

I couldn't hear the Christmas carols over the employees paging other employees to different departments for "customer assistance." Santa's helpers, a.k.a., the store clerks, were seemingly worn out and quite frankly, almost as miserable as the courier driver who comes into our workplace. He has been grumbling for weeks about the endless hours of delivering Christmas parcels to the wee hours of the night, working 12-plus-hour days. The one clerk I

had to deal with earlier, complete with holes in her earlobes the size of a nickel and pierced lips she insisted on playing with her tongue, seemed to forced out a grunted "thanks."

However, I refused to give up hope. Surely there was a Christmas friendly retail sales clerk somewhere in the mall. It was my turn at the checkout at the big retailer even though my original thought when I saw the line-up was, "I'm outta here."

Instead, I decided to take a different approach. When the over-tired, grumpy, fed-up-with-the-season clerk took my cash and looked distraught, I said, "Have a Merry Christmas." With that, he stopped for a moment. What seemed to be him almost in shock and then with an enlightened look replied, "Yeah, you too."

Okay, it wasn't exactly a Charles Dickens moment, but there was a glimmer of hope. At that point, I knew what I wanted for Christmas. Dear Santa, besides world peace and all that stuff, if there is anyway you can stop making it "cool" for teens to have giant gapping holes in their earlobes, my Christmas will be complete.



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