

# 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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*The Interim Plus* is published Bi-Monthly by

*The Interim* Publishing Company

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**Date: December 2015**

**Edition: Volume 15 No. 3**

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## Christmas Edition, 2015

It is our annual Christmas edition of *The Interim Plus*. We present two readings plus several brief statements or quotes to help guide reflection on the meaning of Christmas. Most of the schools that receive this curriculum resource are faith based schools. Is there room today even in those schools for a thoughtful consideration of the event that marked the beginning in history of why these type of schools exist at all? We hope so.

The syllabus is crowded with all kinds of subjects, some compulsory and others optional, but all demanding attention. Let these readings be an opportunity to refresh the mind and the soul. Respond, meditate, stop and think about the power and significance of Christmas, a feast now celebrated by Christians and non-Christians alike and in all corners of our planet. Why?

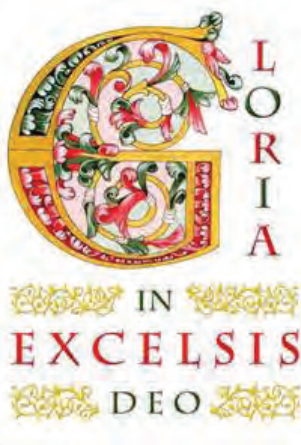
A second part of the Christmas theme is lighthearted, featuring our annual Christmas pot-pourri of trivia. Enjoy and let your students have some fun with it. Oh, there is also a giant Christmas word search.

The other lesson material pertains to media studies and the importance of language, tone, imagery and forms of persuasion when delivering a message.

We give a final reminder to you about the deadline for the Father Ted Colleton Scholarship. It is midnight of December 1. We thank you for your cooperation in bringing this scholarship and essay contest to the attention of your students.

We at *The Interim* newspaper wish you and your school community a blessed and holy Christmas celebration.

**Gloria in excelsis Deo!**



### Reading 1

Original article was in the Italian language. Translated by staff of *The Interim*.

### What is the Meaning of Christmas in Our Day?

By Gioele D'Ambrosio

Just a few days remain until Christmas. Walking down the street I could not help noticing the frenzy that characterizes our hurrying about these days. It's hard to stay focused on what you're doing and not lose sight of the deeper meaning of our to do list, such as choosing a gift. Richard Bach said "*every gift is a wish for happiness*." I think many of us, in the frantic race to get the gift, risk losing sight of that best wish itself. Sadly, we live immersed in a time that flies fast and straight as an arrow, and everything flows in rapid succession: the gifts, the Christmas tree, the decorations. They are all things that should be done, and become "things that must be done". It's anything but happiness and joy! You could say that most of us are more

stressed out than joyful at the coming of Christmas.



Christmas, as we live it today, produces a change to our normal rhythm of life, to our routines, and it exposes us to unusual situations. And that's not even taking into account that this special time of the year puts in front of us unresolved and awkward aspects of our relationships with family, relatives and friends, that could create anxiety and tension.



Unfortunately, we live in a time that does not tolerate physiological moods like sadness or melancholy. It's an age where everything must be and appear *happy*. We imagine happy families like those in popu-

lar movies. People who celebrate Christmas all have a red hat with pom-pom white and sing in harmony "Oh happy day ...". It seems almost mandatory to be happy, *happy* or *very happy* ... and if we're not happy? If we feel slightly down? Why that could cause us to see ourselves as somehow inadequate, or spur a sense of guilt for not being as "others" want us to be. So to meet such expectations gift-exchanging becomes a mad rush to buy presents. In a kind of compulsive-buying mania people tend to lose sight of each other and what they really want. Alas, the original sense of exchanging gifts, sharing a special moment, loses its meaning and gives way to something very ephemeral, a moment that was originally mystical now becomes simply consumer-ystical.

On Christmas Eve most of us gather and sit around a table filled with tasty food prepared in keeping with our traditions. We chat and eat a lot, some of us watch TV or engage in noisy animated discussions. But if we were to stop and ask what we're really celebrating, I think most of us

would not know exactly how to answer and we'd be ignorant of the deeper meaning of what we have carried with us, as a civilization, for over two thousand years.



If we take a look at our world, we can see that now Christmas no longer belongs solely to the Christian community, but to all men, as the celebration has spread to all continents. It has taken on a universal meaning, but at the same time it's cross-cultural. It is the feast of Man, Jesus Christ. But at the same time, according to ancient custom, it is the festival of light. We could say that it is the feast of man awakened by the Light.

This feast endures and expands year by year, despite the economic forces that are profoundly changing its loving and spiritual meaning, denuding it of its mystical and symbolic significance.

If we go in search of the origin of Christmas we might notice that there is a real Christmas firmly rooted in history, geography, and historiography, and also another that includes legendary and mythological elements that are more ancient, tied to the rhythms of the sun and moon, solar festivities, the winter solstice and the cult of "*Sol Invictus*" (the Unconquered Sun). We discover, as well, that this celebration since ancient times has an important cosmic dimension.

Each Christmas brings us back into the dimension of myth and ritual, a collective ritual that revives the earth with light and hope, just when its darkness is deepest. Each year, as we prepare the crib or decorate the tree, we recall fond memories and gentle habits learned in childhood, renewed through various stages of life and passed down from one generation to the next. This applies to families, to moms and dads, but also to those who are alone, because on Christmas Eve, like it or not, people can't help feeling involved in an event that embraces all, because it speaks in a mysterious way to all mankind. It's as if you went from the macrocosm to the microcosm; not only does planetary darkness begin to recede (winter solstice on December 21), but also the darkness within us. But to do this it's important to have "the eyes of Lucerne", as the ancients said, that is, eyes that are full of light and pay attention to the things around us. Focused attention



brings us back to the present; it helps us to reflect between our thoughts and our bad moods. Thanks to this focused attention we can gaze at the perennial set of Christmas lights and amaze ourselves in attributing a new significance to them.

Beyond then the historical significance that Christianity attaches to Christmas, this festival continues to attract us probably because it has deep roots, evoking an almost forgotten dimension and speaks a language whose alphabet we have lost, but of which our soul still harbors an echo.

<http://www.quipsicologia.it/il-significato-del-natale-ai-giorni-nostri/>

### Questions for reflection and discussion

1. Based on the tone, is this article capturing the hidden meaning of Christmas?
2. What does the author suggest is the focus of Christmas for most people?
3. Would you agree? Why or why not?
4. Based on your own observations what do you think about this statement: *You could say that most of us are more stressed out than joyful at the coming of Christmas.*
5. What does the author mean by *a moment that was originally mystical now becomes simply consumer-ytical?*
6. Has anything been lost as the feast of Christmas has become more universal in the process?
7. What is the meaning of Christmas according to this author? Is it spiritual or purely sentimental in nature? Deep or superficial reflection on his part?
8. Is there something lacking in his answer to the meaning of Christmas?



## Reading 2

### What is the real meaning of Christmas?

by John MacArthur

The answer may just surprise you.

For many, Christmas is the time to think of Jesus Christ as a baby in a manger. While the birth of Christ is a special and miraculous event, it isn't the primary focus. The central truth of the Christmas story is this: the Child of

Christmas is God.

Christmas is not about the Savior's infancy; it is about His deity. The humble birth of Jesus Christ was never intended to conceal the reality that God was being born into the world.

But the modern world's version of Christmas does just that. And consequently for the greater part of humanity, Christmas has no legitimate meaning at all.

I don't suppose anyone can ever fathom what it means for God to be born in a manger. How does one explain the Almighty stooping to become a tiny infant? Our minds cannot begin to understand what was involved in God's becoming man.

Nor can anyone explain how God could become a baby. Yet He did. Without forsaking His divine nature or diminishing His deity, He was born into our world as a tiny infant.

He was fully human, with all the needs and emotions that are common to us all. Yet He was also fully God--all wise and all powerful.

For nearly 2,000 years, debate has been raging about who Jesus really is. Cults and skeptics have offered various explanations. They'll say He is one of many gods, a created being, a high angel, a good teacher, a prophet, and so on. The common thread of all such theories is that they make Jesus less than God. But the biblical evidence is overwhelming that this child in the manger was the incarnation of God.

One passage in particular, written by the apostle Paul, captures the essence of Jesus' divine nature and underscores the truths that make Christmas truly wonderful.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation. For . . . all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first born from the dead; so that*



*He Himself might come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross.* (Colossians 1:15-20)

Paul was writing to the Christians at Colossae. The city was under the influence of what came to be known as gnosticism. Its adherents fancied themselves the only ones who had access to the truth, which they believed was so complex that common people couldn't know it. Among other things, they taught philosophical dualism—the idea that matter is evil and spirit is good. They believed that because God is spirit, He is good, but He could never touch matter, which is evil.

Therefore they also concluded that God couldn't be the creator of the physical universe, because if God made matter, He would be responsible for evil. And they taught that God could never become a man, because as a man He would have to dwell in a body made of evil matter.

The apostle Paul refuted that heresy when he wrote, *"By Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created by Him and for Him"* (1:16). He specifically affirmed that Jesus is God in the flesh – the Creator of everything.

Scripture repeatedly says that God is invisible (John 1:18; 5:37; 1 Timothy 1:17; and Colossians 1:15). But through Christ the invisible God has been made visible. God's full likeness is revealed in Him. Colossians 1:19 takes the truth a step further: "It was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him." He is not just an outline of God; He is fully God. Colossians 2:9 is even more explicit: "In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." Nothing is lacking. No attribute is absent. He is God in the fullest possible sense, the perfect image.

In Colossians 1:15 Paul says Jesus is "the first born of all creation." Those who reject the deity of Christ have made much of that phrase, assuming it means Jesus was a created being. But the word translated "first born" describes Jesus' rank, not His origin. The first-born in a Hebrew family was the heir, the ranking one, the one who had the right of inheritance. And in a royal family, he had the right to rule.

So Christ is the One who inherits all creation and the right to rule over it. It doesn't mean He was born first in order, for He wasn't.

Hebrews 1:2 also identifies Christ as the Creator. Christ was the Person of the Trinity through whom the world was made and for whom it was fashioned.

The size of the universe is incomprehensible.

Who made all that? Some scientists say there was this big explosion that eventually formed a primordial swamp, and ... Science cannot explain it. God created it all.

Who?

The babe in Bethlehem. He made everything.

<http://www.gty.org/resources/Questions/QA70/What-is-the-real-meaning-of-Christmas>

### Questions for reflection and discussion

1. Right from the top, how does this article differ from the first reading?
2. *But the modern world's version of Christmas does just that.* What does MacArthur mean by this?
3. What have various people thought about the nature and role of Jesus over the centuries?
4. Who were the gnostics at Colossae to whom Paul wrote?
5. What did those people believe?
6. How does the author use the scripture to refute those beliefs?
7. Are those beliefs propagated today in popular culture, media, movies, song, etc? How?
8. What really happened on the first Christmas according to MacArthur?

### Humble origins have an eternal reality

By Father Ted Colleton

"God so loved the world that He sent His only Son, that we might have life through Him." – First Letter of St. John

There is a story, really a parable about a very rich man who had a little daughter of 6 or 7, whom he loved with all his heart. When Christmas came around, he wanted to really let her know how much he loved her, so he bought her a very expensive pearl. He wrapped it up in coloured paper and bound the parcel with a lovely red ribbon.





On Christmas morning he gave it to her and waited for her reaction. She slowly opened the parcel. When she came to the pearl, she looked at it and put it aside. Then she tied the ribbon around her hair and began to make figures with the coloured paper. She went to her room to look at herself, leaving the pearl aside.



Every parable has a lesson. I think the lesson of this one is this: Christmas comes to us well wrapped up in the trappings of this world—the Santa Claus Parade, the parties, the gifts, the music, the eating and drinking. It is more than possible that in spite of our Faith, we can be so distracted by all the material externals that we miss the real meaning of Christmas, the Pearl of great price, the Christ Child in the manger.

Of course if we were asked directly what Christmas is all about, we would say, “The birth of Christ.” But how much real impact has that stupendous happening on our thinking as we rush around to get everything ready for Christmas? And so I would like to reflect a little on the meaning of this Event compared with which every other event in human history pales into utter insignificance.

Who was this Child that lay in the manger in Bethlehem some two thousand years ago? For us Christians there can only be one answer. He was and is God—as really and truly God as is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

Christmas is the greatest story ever told, a story which surpasses every other story as the ocean surpasses a stream or as the sun outshines the flicker of a candle. So, suppose we span the centuries in our imagination and come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing.

Having bowed our heads in order to enter the cave or stable, what do we see? A young man. St. Joseph was not old as pictures usually portray him, but a young Jew in his early twenties. With him is a young woman—probably of more than ordinary beauty—and in the manger, a Baby. According to a tradition based on a verse of the Prophet Isaiah,



an ox and a donkey were also in attendance, chewing quietly and probably a little annoyed at these unex-

pected visitors. And we believe that this Baby was the God who created the universe. Are we insane? No, we are not! For this Baby divides history into two parts—the events which happened before his birth and the events that occurred after it. B.C. means before Christ and A.D. means in the Year of the Lord.

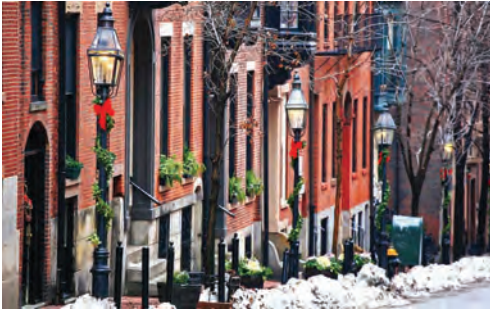
All the Old Testament looked forward to this event. All the New Testament is based on it. Every official document of Church or State bears witness to the Birth of Christ for it must be dated to be valid. The date 1997 means roughly nineteen hundred and ninety-seven years since a Baby was born in a stable at Bethlehem. On what do we base this stupendous claim that this Babe was the Eternal God, the King of Heaven and Earth? We could quote many texts of scripture, but, perhaps, the most pertinent is in the very first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and the Word was made flesh and lived among us.”



But why did Our Lord come amongst us in such a lowly manner. Could He not have come some other way? Of course He could have. He could have come as He tells us He will come at the end of the world, with great power and majesty and all the angels with Him. But why did He come as a tiny Babe bereft of power and majesty?

I could best explain the reason with a parable-like story which is completely un-theological and reduces God to human terms. Let us imagine God the Father, up in Heaven, calling God the Son one day and saying, “Son, look down on earth. There they are eating and drinking and buying and selling; and killing and living as if there were no other life. They have been like that since Adam defied Me in the Garden, and rejected My friendship. Now I want You to go down on earth and bring them back to My friendship and teach them to adopt My values.”

And the Son says, “You mean You want Me to go down



and take over the world and show them by force that they must obey You?”

And God the Father says, “No, My Son.

That would never do. I want You to become really one of them. You are a Divine Person with a Divine Nature. You are God, just as I am. But I want You, while remaining God to take on a human nature which makes You a man just as real as they are. So You will be a Divine Person with two natures, the Divine Nature which makes You God and a human nature which makes You a man. Men, in their blind pride, think that riches are the most important things in the world; so I want You to be poor. Men think that power is of paramount importance; so I want You to be weak. Men are convinced that un-trammelled pleasure leads to true happiness; so I want You to show them, by suffering, how wrong they are. Men think that freedom is to be found by disobeying My laws; so I want You to be totally obedient to all My commandments.

“But I warn You, My Son, that Your obedience will bring You into conflict with the powers that be, both the religious authorities and the civil authorities and they will hound You to a terrible death.

“I am appointing You as the Second Head of the human race to take the place of the First Head, Adam, who failed through pride. I will accept Your death in obedience and humility as reparation for the pride and disobedience of Adam and as a result I shall re-establish friendship with men and open to them the Gates of Heaven. Before You return to Heaven after Your Resurrection, I want You to establish a Church on earth through which You will continue to teach and sanctify all those who will listen to You and accept Your values for You will be for them the Way and the Truth and the Life and through You, working in Your Church, they will attain the eternal glory of Heaven.”

This, in very human terms is the story of our Redemption and the meaning of Christmas, the love of God for us.

Christmas is a challenge to our material world. Here is something which should make us reflect. Two apparently completely different types of people found their way to the feet of the Babe of Bethlehem. First came the shepherds, almost certainly not only poor but unlearned. The

second group was that of the Wise Men. They were not kings as the Middle Ages artists portrayed them, but men of science—astronomers, men who studied the movements of stars, the most learned men of their age. They, too, came to the feet of Christ. How different these two groups appear to be at first assessment. But they had two things in common. First of all they were humble and unworldly. Secondly, because they were humble, they were seekers of truth. Looking out across the world today we see that only the scenery has changed. For Bethlehem read Boston; for Nazareth read New York; for Jerusalem read Toronto. The actors are really the same.

Christ still divides the world of men and things—those who are for Him and those who are against Him. There is no comfortable fence. And the actors in the drama of Redemption are the same—the rich and the poor; the proud and the humble; the worldly and the unworldly—we are all there on the stage of life. And in the spiritual cave there is room for all of us if only we will enter. But there is just one common passport. In order to enter the Cave of Bethlehem people had to bow their heads. In order to enter the Spiritual cave we also must bow our heads by being humble. Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. True humility is the only passport to the feet of the Christ Child

*This article originally appeared December 1997.*

<http://www.theinterim.com/issues/marriage-family/humble-origins-have-an-eternal-reality-2/#sthash.XwCksHCw.dpuf>

## Questions for reflection and discussion

1. How does the parable cited by Fr. Colleton help explain the meaning of Christmas?
2. What was revolutionary about the event in Bethlehem?
3. According to Father Colleton why did Jesus not come with great pomp and circumstance?
4. How is history dependent on Christ's birth? What does the new usage of CE instead of AD for dating purposes a sign of? Should people today accept this new secular method of dating?
5. How does Christ both unite and divide mankind?
6. In comparison of the three readings, which gave you the best insight into the true meaning of Christmas? Why?

## Christmas Wishes On a Tree.

Here is an interesting activity that every student could be asked to create for themselves with their own Christmas poem expressing their wish or message. It could take the shape of a tree as shown here, or a candy cane, or a star, a musical note or some other item associated with Christmas.

Well  
What do  
do you think Lord  
if this Christmas I were  
to make a beautiful tree in my  
heart; and instead of placing gifts there  
I were to place the names of all my friends;  
those far away and those nearby; the old and the new;  
those I see every day and those I see once in a while; those  
I think about often and those I sometimes forget; those that are  
constant and those that come and go; those I have made to suffer  
unintentionally, and those who unintentionally have made me suffer;  
those whom I know deeply and those whom I barely know; those who owe me  
a lot and those to whom I owe a lot; those who are my simple friends and those friends  
who are important to me in all ways; and the names of all who have been a part of my life.

A tree with really  
deep roots, because  
their names will never  
leave my heart; a tree  
whose branches are really  
big, because the new names  
having come from all over  
the world should unite with  
those already there; a tree  
with a very pleasant shade  
so our friendship becomes  
a moment of rest and calm  
during the struggles of life.

**Merry Christmas from Lisa-poesilandia**  
**The Christmas Tree -poem by poesilandia**



## CHRISTMAS FUN

For those hectic days leading up to Christmas here are a few multiple choice questions that will keep students focused and still give them enjoyment. Here are 45 questions on the lore associated with the celebration of Christmas, some of it is scripture based and some is drawn from the field of literature, song and popular entertainment. It is a tough quiz, with some questions on the rather easy side, but many requiring an erudition in multiple fields. Good luck!

- Who uttered 'Bah, humbug' to express disgust with Christmas charity? a) Silas Marner b) Ebenezer Scrooge c) The Grinch d) Fred Flintstone
- At the Port of Vancouver, young girls dress in traditional kimonos to accompany the arrival of what special first shipment from Japan that kicks off the Christmas season for many Canadians? a) Video games b) Cell-phones c) Plasma TVs d) Oranges
- Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more!* From what children's classic does this quote come from? a) How the Grinch Stole Christmas b) The Nutcracker c) Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs d) The Snow Maiden
- Unless we make Christmas an occasion to share our blessings, all the snow in Alaska won't make it white.* Who spoke these words? a) Peter Lorre b) Gary Cooper c) Jonathan Winters d) Bing Crosby
- Who composed the first Canadian Christmas carol based in an Aboriginal language? a) St. Jean de Brebeuf b) Gilles Vigneault c) St. Kateri Tekakwitha d) St. Marguerite Bourgeoys
- Christmas is the one time of year when people of all religions come together to worship Jesus Christ.* To whom is this statement attributed? a) Charlie Brown b) Bart Simpson c) Alice in Wonderland d) The Scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz
- Who kidded with this joke: *Mail your packages early so the post office can lose them in time for Christmas.* a) David Letterman b) Johnny Carson c) Johnny Wayne d) Jack Benny
- St. Stephen was the first martyr. What is the date of his feast day? a) December 26 b) January 1 c) March 25 d) December 6
- In Charles Dickens' novel *A Christmas Carol*, who was Scrooge's dead business partner? a) Bob Cratchit b) Stuart Blake c) Jacob Marley d) Theodore Sims
- The song *White Christmas* was first performed in which 1942 film? a) Brigadoon b) Holiday Inn c) Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World d) Silver Jubilee
- Who put a thumb in his Christmas pie and pulled out a plum? a) Peter Piper b) Pinocchio c) Little Jack Horner d) Jughead Brown
- In the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, '...my true love brought to me nine...' what? a) Ladies dancing b) teeth a' aching c) yellow ribbons d) mothers of pearl
- Two of the original reindeers in a famous poem were called Donner and Blitzen. In German these mean: a) Thunder and Lightning b) Clever and Agile c) Bow and Arrow d) Loud and Quick
- During Christmas in Quebec, a Yuletide tradition is a *réveillon*. What exactly is it? a) A Christmas dance b) A Christmas bouquet c) A Christmas banquet d) A Christmas party game akin to bingo.





15. Which Christmas carol includes the lyrics *To save us all from Satan's power, when we were gone astray..?* a) We Three Kings of Orient Are  
b) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen  
c) Deck the Halls d) Good King Wenceslaus
16. In 1905, which company sponsored the first Santa Claus Parade in Toronto? a) The Bay  
b) Le Château c) The T. Eaton Company  
d) Simpsons
17. What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant? a) white b) pink c) blue d) red
18. In the inspirational 1946 film, *It's a Wonderful Life*, who starred as George Bailey? A) Spencer Tracy b) Tyrone Power c) Cary Grant d) James Stewart
19. In what year was Band-Aid's *Do They Know It's Christmas* first a Christmas chart-topping record? a) 1994  
b) 1984 c) 1990 d) 2002
20. From which country does the poinsettia plant originate? a) United States b) Mexico c) Cuba d) Dominican Republic
21. Who is officially credited as the author of *Auld Lang Syne*? a) Robert Burns b) Henry Longfellow  
c) Dylan Thomas d) Robert Frost
22. How many points does a snowflake have? a) eleven b) eight c) twelve d) six
23. What is the name of the cake traditionally eaten in Italy at Christmas? a) Panet-  
tone b) Torta c) Zabaglione d) Tira Misu
24. In what large country in geographical area, is Christmas known as Bada Din (the big day)? a) India b) China  
c) Sudan d) Congo
25. *And all the bells on earth shall ring, on Christmas day in the morning...* is from which Christmas carol?  
a) Silver Bells b) O Little Town of Bethlehem c) I Saw Three Ships d) Mary's Little Boy Child
26. Marzipan is made (conventionally in the western world) mainly from sugar and the flour or meal of which nut? a) chestnut b) almond c) hazel d) pecan
27. Which American-born English poet, having first names Thomas Stearns, wrote the poem *The Cultivation Of Christmas Trees*? a) T.S. Caldwell b) T. S. Eliot c) T.S. Baldwin d) T.S. Owens
28. During the 12 Days of Christmas in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, kids often wear masks, make noise, ring bells and go door-to-door seeking treats. Which name do they go by? a) Mummers b) Bummers c) Belsnicklers  
d) Both a and c
29. In Britain it is traditionally believed that eating a what each day of the twelve days of Christmas brings happiness the following year: a) sausage b) mince pie c) plum pudding d) turkey drumstick.
30. What is the surname of the family in the 1989 film *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*? a) Griswold  
b) Pillsbury c) Washington d) Bussbaum
31. Who composed the music known as *The Nutcracker Suite*, for the Christmas themed ballet *The Nutcracker*?  
a) Chaliapin b) Prokofiev c) Tchaikovsky d) Rachmaninoff
32. In which country does Santa have his own personal postal code HOH



OHO? a) Japan b) Canada c) Finland  
d) Denmark

33. To which country did the Holy Family flee to seek refuge? a) Jordan b) Yemen c) Egypt d) Nubia
34. Which angel visited Mary, the mother of Jesus? a) Raphael b) Michael c) Gabriel d) Samuel
35. Which city is officially known as “*The Christmas Capital of Canada*”?  
a) Toronto b) Montreal c) Winnipeg d) Victoria
36. Which Canadian chain store once featured *Give like Santa, Save like Scrooge* as its sales slogan during the holiday season? a) RONA b) Tip Top Tailors c) Canadian Tire d) Mark’s Work Wearhouse
37. How did the Magi find the location where to visit Jesus? a) in a dream b) through an angelic messenger  
c) secret spy d) followed a star.
38. To which main city in Judaea did the Wise Men first go to ask where they might find Jesus? a) Jerusalem  
b) Nazareth c) Caesarea Philippi d) Jericho
39. What huge Christmas gift did France give to the united States of America in 1886? a) Brook-  
lyn Bridge  
b) Sculpture on Mount Rushmore c) Golden Gate Bridge d) Statue of Liberty
40. How many gifts in total were given in the song On the Twelfth Day of Christmas? a) 78  
b) 364 c) 156 d) 234
41. In the movie “*A Christmas Story*” what did Ralphie want for Christmas? a) a bow and arrow  
b) a BB gun c) a laser sword d) a new toy skidoo
42. What food is made from “marsh-whorts”? a) turkey filling b) panettone c) cranberry sauce d)  
marshmallows.
43. Christmas Island is located in which ocean? a) Atlantic b) Pacific c) Arctic d) Indian.
44. In which author’s novel is it “*always winter but never Christmas*”? a) C.S.Lewis b) John Masefield  
c) Charles Dickens d) Jules Verne.
45. What is the most popular natural Christmas tree in Cana-  
da? a) Balsam fir b) Fraser fir c) Scotch pine  
d) White spruce.



## ANSWERS

1 b	2. d	3. a	4. d	5. a	6. b	7. b	8. a
9. c	10. b	11. c	12. a	13. a	14. c	15. b	16. c
17. a	18. d	19. b	20. b	21. a	22. d	23. a	24. a
25. c	26. b	27. b	28. d	29. b	30. a	31. c	32. b
33. c	34. c	35. c	36. d	37. d	38. a	39. d	40. b

**Rate your score on the quiz. No cheating.**

**1-10 correct. You have a long ways to go to learn about Christmas**

**11-20 correct. You have a fair knowledge base of the Holy season**

**21-30 correct. You are approaching mastery.**

**31-35 correct. This is phenomenal.**

**36-40 correct. You made up the quiz.**



# Solve the giant Christmas word search: Find the words below

INCARNATION  
GABRIEL  
MAGI  
BETHLEHEM  
STAR  
ZACHARIAH  
ANNE  
HEROD  
SHEPHERDS  
MARY

CENSUS  
JOSEPH  
DAVID  
TINSEL  
AUGUSTUS  
MISTLETOE  
CIRCUMCISION  
POINSETTIA  
INN  
EGYPT

CRECHE  
SIMEON  
TEMPLE  
CAROLS  
MANGER  
SHOPPING  
PUDDING  
CHRISTMAS  
LOVE  
BLESSING

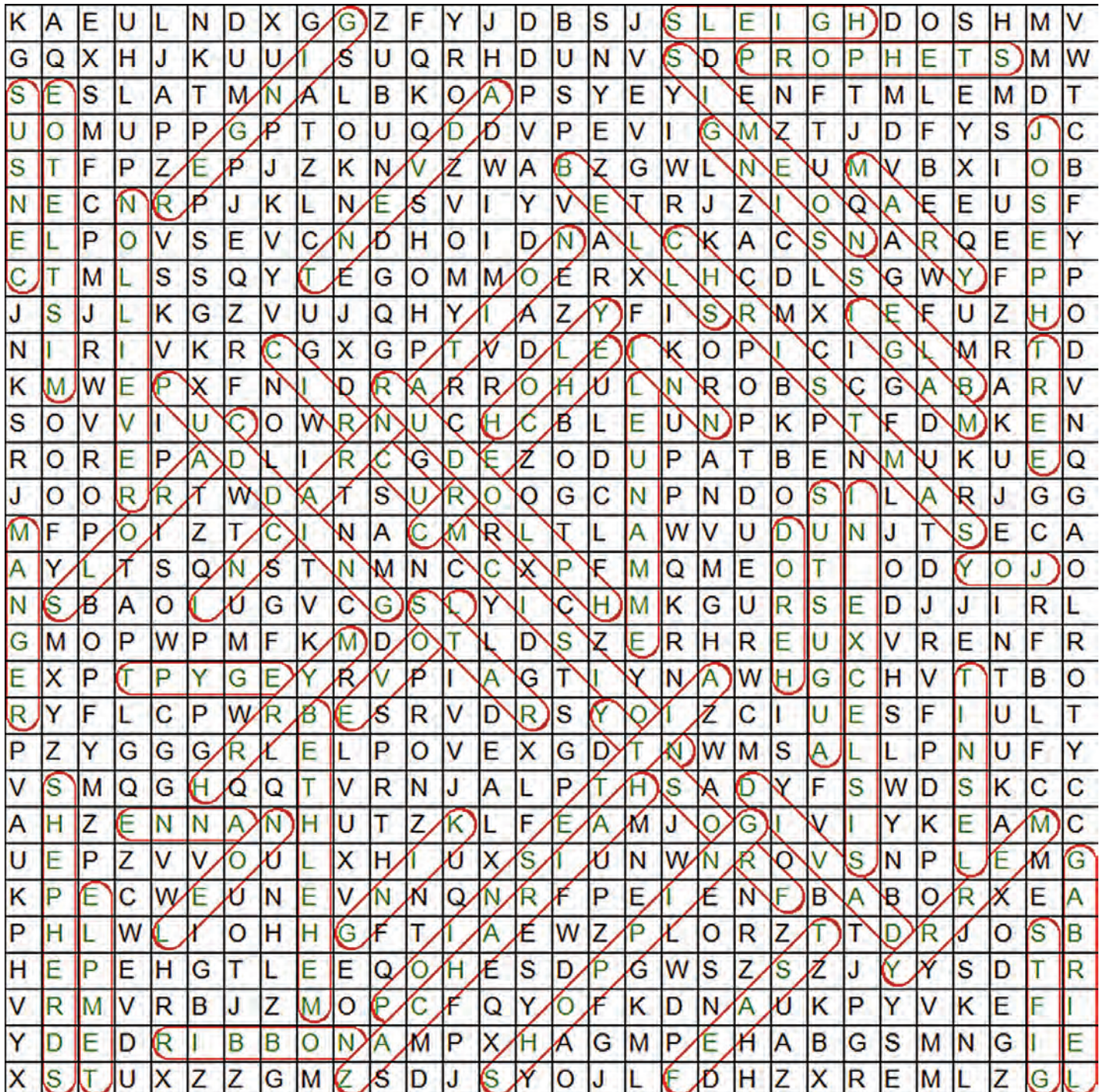
HOLY  
FEAST  
ADVENT  
BELLS  
TREE  
RIBBON  
SLEIGH  
RUDOLPH  
FROSTY  
MERRY

GINGER  
EMMANUEL  
KING  
NOEL  
JOY  
GIFTS  
IN EXCELSIS  
MYRRH  
REVEILLON  
PROPHETS

K	A	E	U	L	N	D	X	G	G	Z	F	Y	J	D	B	S	J	S	L	E	I	G	H	D	O	S	H	M	V
G	Q	X	H	J	K	U	U	I	S	U	Q	R	H	D	U	N	V	S	D	P	R	O	P	H	E	T	S	M	W
S	E	S	L	A	T	M	N	A	L	B	K	O	A	P	S	Y	E	Y	I	E	N	F	T	M	L	E	M	D	T
U	O	M	U	P	P	G	P	T	O	U	Q	D	D	V	P	E	V	I	G	M	Z	T	J	D	F	Y	S	J	C
S	T	F	P	Z	E	P	J	Z	K	N	V	Z	W	A	B	Z	G	W	L	N	E	U	M	V	B	X	I	O	B
N	E	C	N	R	P	J	K	L	N	E	S	V	I	Y	V	E	T	R	J	Z	I	O	Q	A	E	E	U	S	F
E	L	P	O	V	S	E	V	C	N	D	H	O	I	D	N	A	L	C	K	A	C	S	N	A	R	Q	E	E	Y
C	T	M	L	S	S	Q	Y	T	E	G	O	M	M	O	E	R	X	L	H	C	D	L	S	G	W	Y	F	P	P
J	S	J	L	K	G	Z	V	U	J	Q	H	Y	I	A	Z	Y	F	I	S	R	M	X	I	E	F	U	Z	H	O
N	I	R	I	V	K	R	C	G	X	G	P	T	V	D	L	E	I	K	O	P	I	C	I	G	L	M	R	T	D
K	M	W	E	P	X	F	N	I	D	R	A	R	R	O	H	U	L	N	R	O	B	S	C	G	A	B	A	R	V
S	O	V	V	I	U	C	O	W	R	N	U	C	H	C	B	L	E	U	N	P	K	P	T	F	D	M	K	E	N
R	O	R	E	P	A	D	L	I	R	C	G	D	E	Z	O	D	U	P	A	T	B	E	N	M	U	K	U	E	Q
J	O	O	R	R	T	W	D	A	T	S	U	R	O	O	G	C	N	P	N	D	O	S	I	L	A	R	J	G	G
M	F	P	O	I	Z	T	C	I	N	A	C	M	R	L	T	L	A	W	V	U	D	U	N	J	T	S	E	C	A
A	Y	L	T	S	Q	N	S	T	N	M	N	C	C	X	P	F	M	Q	M	E	O	T		O	D	Y	O	J	O
N	S	B	A	O	I	U	G	V	C	G	S	L	Y	I	C	H	M	K	G	U	R	S	E	D	J	J	I	R	L
G	M	O	P	W	P	M	F	K	M	D	O	T	L	D	S	Z	E	R	H	R	E	U	X	V	R	E	N	F	R
E	X	P	T	P	Y	G	E	Y	R	V	P	I	A	G	T	I	Y	N	A	W	H	G	C	H	V	T	T	B	O
R	Y	F	L	C	P	W	R	B	E	S	R	V	D	R	S	Y	O	I	Z	C	I	U	E	S	F	I	U	L	T
P	Z	Y	G	G	G	R	L	E	L	P	O	V	E	X	G	D	T	N	W	M	S	A	L	L	P	N	U	F	Y
V	S	M	Q	G	H	Q	Q	T	V	R	N	J	A	L	P	T	H	S	A	D	Y	F	S	W	D	S	K	C	C
A	H	Z	E	N	N	A	N	H	U	T	Z	K	L	F	E	A	M	J	O	G	I	V	I	Y	K	E	A	M	C
U	E	P	Z	V	V	O	U	L	X	H	I	U	X	S	I	U	N	W	N	R	O	V	S	N	P	L	E	M	G
K	P	E	C	W	E	U	N	E	V	N	N	Q	N	R	F	P	E	I	E	N	F	B	A	B	O	R	X	E	A
P	H	L	W	L	I	O	H	H	G	F	T	I	A	E	W	Z	P	L	O	R	Z	T	T	D	R	J	O	S	B
H	E	P	E	H	G	T	L	E	E	Q	O	H	E	S	D	P	G	W	S	Z	S	Z	J	Y	Y	S	D	T	R
V	R	M	V	R	B	J	Z	M	O	P	C	F	Q	Y	O	F	K	D	N	A	U	K	P	Y	V	K	E	F	I
Y	D	E	D	R	I	B	B	O	N	A	M	P	X	H	A	G	M	P	E	H	A	B	G	S	M	N	G	I	E
X	S	T	U	X	Z	Z	G	M	Z	S	D	J	S	Y	O	J	L	F	D	H	Z	X	R	E	M	L	Z	G	L



## Christmas word search solution





# Media Studies

## bias

The study of language in its varied forms, usages and expression is very important. The means of communications keep changing and becoming more technology-

based. But crucial to it always is the message that is being communicated and how that is done effectively. The recipients of the messaging can better understand the intent of the message, the motivation of the sender and their own response to the message if they pay careful attention and analyze the whole process carefully. The following lessons were crafted by Corinne Malan, another of our summer interns.

There are many examples to choose from in order to analyze the language, tone, and point of view used in media texts. In the first lesson the focus is on identifying the use of euphemisms to promote a particular point of view in a press conference, broadcast, newsreport or other similar communications forum. Well known examples could be used by the teacher to introduce the concept of euphemisms: “Why is the term ‘collateral damage’ used instead of ‘civilian deaths’ in political press conferences?” “How and why does a television news anchor change his or her tone of voice and vocabulary depending on the news story being reported?”

## Assignment A

1. Here is a link to an exhaustive article on the problem of bias when reporting on anything to do with abortion. Although it refers to American experiences, it is equally applicable to the Canadian scene. <http://groups.csail.mit.edu/mac/users/rauch/nvp/media/shaw1.html>
2. Ask students to find two articles on the issue of abortion in Canada but with contrasting tone/language/points of view. Two examples may be the reports on the **National March for Life** that take place each year in Ottawa on the second Thursday of May.
3. Have them identify common euphemisms e.g., “pro-choice”, “anti-abortion”, etc. and examine their effects on the public.
4. How has legalized abortion being dubbed “pro-choice” instead of “pro-abortion”, or even “pro-death” affected our

## media bias

culture’s predominant view on abortion?

5. What is our society’s predominant view on abortion, especially when called “choice”?
6. How does the euphemism “pro-choice” draw the focus of abortion to women’s rights and individual autonomy, two issues integral to the liberal democracies of Europe and North America, rather than drawing attention to the fact that the pre-born child is a living human being?
7. How does the euphemism “pro-choice” draw attention away from the fact that pre-born humans have human rights too? Doesn’t bodily autonomy of say, mothers, end where the body of others – their children – begin?

## Assignment B

In this second assignment analyse the representation of groups and individuals in visual media like television and movies. A culture can depict family life in a variety of ways, for example with great respect or mocking hilarity. Students will be encouraged to discuss how the message of a popular television program can mock traditional roles of moms and dads. As an introduction the teacher may wish to gauge whether television watching or movie going are popular activities for the students. The impact of these media would be quite different if in fact few bother to watch television or frequent the movie theaters or watch movies on television.

## Classroom activity

1. If they are avid television watchers (whether on regular tv or via computer or other device) or moviegoers, ask them about their favourite programs or movies seen recently and what they liked about the program or movie.
2. Then ask them if they see people they can identify with on those shows or in those movies. Why or why not?
3. Did they notice any negative stereotypes in the shows or movies?
4. With specific reference to fathers, how does media generally portray fathers – respectful, brave, knowledgeable or helpless, ignorant, bumbling fools? Give two examples.  
(NB – to illustrate media’s representation of fatherhood, show an episode of an old series from the 1950s like Father Knows Best  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO409o4Sg7Q>

Disney Channel- Suite  
Life of Zack & Cody:  
[http://www.imdb.com/  
title/tt0426371/?ref\\_=tt\\_  
rec\\_tti](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0426371/?ref_=tt_rec_tti)  
or Desperate Housewives:  
[http://www.imdb.com/  
title/tt0410975/?ref\\_=nv\\_  
sr\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0410975/?ref_=nv_sr_1)

to illustrate mainstream  
media's representation of  
dads; contrast with a pro-family, pro-heroic father-  
hood movie/show like Courageous: [http://www.imdb.  
com/title/tt1630036/?ref\\_=nv\\_sr\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1630036/?ref_=nv_sr_1))



culture and the media and Hollywood an  
allergic reaction to gender roles?

9. Society seems to be losing sight of the  
notion of complementarity between the  
sexes. Have them read the following article  
dealing with the objective nature of comple-  
mentarian gender roles:

[https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/why-  
moms-and-dads-both-matter-in-marriage](https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/why-moms-and-dads-both-matter-in-marriage)

10. What does this article suggest about  
gender roles? How do mothers and dads differ in  
the raising of children? Why is it important for the  
children to learn from each of the parents, mom and  
dad?

11. Is the com-  
plementarity  
of these roles  
of mom and  
dad get re-  
flected in the  
media? Why  
or why not?



5. What has led the media to adopt this questionable  
point of view?
6. What impact has media's portrayal of family life,  
specifically fathers, had on society's perception of the  
role of fathers and on fatherhood?
7. How has media's representation of dads influenced  
our culture's view of fatherhood and male and female  
roles?
8. Has our sensitivity to patriarchal sexism given

# Merry Christmas!







