

The Interim Plus + + + + +

Curriculum Learning Resource

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Part A

To do justice to the theme of Christmas it is best to start with the original source for the story, the New Testament part of the Bible. This learning/teaching resource presents the information from a Christian point of view. Tyhere is also a gentle reminder of the closing deadline for submissions to the *Father Ted Colleton Scholarship* – December 1, 2021. Father Ted was one who took great pleasure in writing about Christmas and celebrating it among friends and in special settings when he was a missionary in Kenya.

The gospel of St. Luke offers us one of the best renditions of what happened in Bethlehem some 2000 years ago. Emperors, kings, generals, philosophers, scientists, artists, poets, novelists, inventors, playwrights, composers have come and gone. Empires have risen and fallen. Great works of art have been created and destroyed. Scientific theorems and technical wonders have appeared and changed the material world. Voyages of discovery have made the planet smaller and more familiar. Outer space beckons. The computer and artificial intelligence bring new potential breakthroughs. But, the birth of one child is celebrated each year on December 25. Here is how it happened, Luke 2:1-20: (Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition)

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. ² This was the first enrollment, when Quirin'i-us was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she gave birth to her first-born^[a] son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; ¹¹ for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there

was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"^[b]

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things,



pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ *And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.*

So why should the birth of this particular baby echo throughout the ages? Perhaps an introduction to the answer may be found in this Christmas Editorial from The Interim, December 8, 2007, a repeat of one that first appeared in 1988 in the same life and family monthly.

The babe in the manger has so much to say to us

Billions of babies have been born during the past 2,000 years. A few of them, who happened to be of royal blood, had the privilege of having their birthdays celebrated with some pomp and ceremony in their own countries. With their deaths and the passage of time, not only have their birthdays, but the people themselves, been forgotten.

There is but one child whose birthday has been celebrated, not only in his own country, but also throughout the entire world and in every age for almost 20 centuries. Perhaps we have become so used to Christmas that we cease to wonder and ask ourselves: why? What is the difference between the child who was born in a cave or stable 2,000 years ago and every other child who has been born since or will be born into this world of ours?

Christmas is the birthday of God made man. A quick run through the theology of the Incarnation – the taking flesh by the Word of God – might help us to see Christmas as more than a worldly festival and a commercial feast.

For a short period after the death and Resurrection of Christ, Christians simply accepted on faith the fact that He was God as well as man. Then the intellectuals got going and began to ask themselves, “How could God become man?” And the first few centuries of the Church are strewn with heretics. They were all trying to explain how God could become man. They fell into error.

It was in correcting these errors that the church, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, finally gave us the concise doctrine which may be called the very heart of Christian theology today regarding who the babe really was.

The Catholic church teaches that Jesus Christ, from the first moment of his conception, was truly God and truly man; that the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who had a divine nature from all eternity, in time assumed or took, a human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary and is therefore fully and completely God and fully and completely man. You might say, “Well does it matter that much? Why not let us just enjoy Christmas without annoying us with a lot of theory? Does it make that much difference to our lives?” Well, if it doesn’t, it should.

You see, if the Christ child in the crib was not both God and man, then the man who died on the cross 33 years later was not both God and man and you and I have not been redeemed. And, if we have not been redeemed, then we can’t get into Heaven!

Christmas is not just the vague commemoration of a single event that took place 2,000 years ago, dressed in fun. St. Paul said that, “In the fullness of time, God sent his Son, born of a woman, to redeem us and to make us adopted sons.”

We are still living in the fullness of time. We are still today being redeemed by the Blood of Jesus. The angel said to Joseph, “She (Mary) will give birth to a child and you must call his name Jesus, for He will save his people from their sins.” In the Acts, St. Peter says, “There is no other name under Heaven by which we can be saved.”

So, this is the wonderful exchange which took place at the Incarnation. God assumed our nature so that He may communicate to us a share in his divine nature or sanctifying grace. Without that grace, we could not enter Heaven and without the death of Christ, we could in no way have ever won back for ourselves the grace which Adam had lost. And without the crib we could not have had the cross.

Christ had to be born that He might die. In fact, He is the only man who was born to die. We all die, but we are born for life. Christ was born into this world so that He might die for us. Our salvation is not an automatic process.

If we are to benefit from the salvation which Christ won for us, we must live in such a way that we are worthy of it. And that is the significance of the life of Christ between the crib and the Cross. It was not sufficient to open for us the gates of Heaven. He had to show us the way to get there. He did that by living life according to the values of God. In his life, we can find every value.

Perhaps, this Christmas, we might dwell on one in particular, his detachment from things of this world. St. Paul tells us that, whilst He was rich before, He became poor for our sakes.

Christ could have come into the world as a rich man, a man of power and worldly influence, but He didn't. Surely, there is a lesson for us in this. Western society has become so materially minded that men measure success in terms of the making of money. And yet, when God came down into this world to show us what He considered a perfect and successful life, He came as a relatively poor man, who had the necessities of life, but none of the extras to which modern man pays so much court. He was born in a stable; He worked at a trade; He died almost naked on a cross, and he said, "I have given you an example that as I have done so also you should do."

The silent babe in the manger has so much to say to us if only we will listen!

(First published in The Interim December 1988.)

Let's ask again: Why did He come? Why did God send His son to dwell among us in this sometimes brutal, unjust and hard world? He sent Jesus to us so that we would be saved from the consequences of sin. Without Jesus, we would all die in our sins.

For thousands of years all of humanity waited for the coming of Christ; the Jewish people longed for their King to arrive and free them from oppression. The Old Testament is full of prophecies, including this one from Isaiah 9:1



*Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed,
As when at first He lightly esteemed
The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
And afterward more heavily oppressed her,
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
In Galilee of the Gentiles.
The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them a light has shined.*

God promised a Savior in the Garden of Eden, but the fulfilment of the promise was a long time arriving. We hear words such as "yearning," "waiting," "hoping," "watching," "longing," "looking," and "preparing" throughout the holy season of Advent. Isaiah described His coming as an infant. When we celebrate Christmas, we are celebrating the moment in history when prophecy and promise was fulfilled. God came to be with us. It wasn't just another birth. It was the beginning of God's redemptive plan for humanity. Jesus coming to Earth that night changed everything and it's a moment we should celebrate with all our hearts. Christ came with a plan for our redemption, to give us hope, peace and joy, not just at Christmas but every day of our lives.

Yet, today Christmas is likely the most important consumption festival in the world, a blend of the sacred and the secular as the season has been globalized. We have Santa Claus and the Christmas tree; the holly wreath, mistletoe and the poinsettia; snow and reindeer; hearths, chimneys and stockings; the yule log, egg nogs and hot toddies; ribbons and bows, tinsel and stars; roast turkey, roast goose and ham;

bonbons, torrone, fruitcake and panettone; carols and caroling; background music in shopping plazas; and splashes of red and green appearing everywhere. Alongside these superficial secular signposts one also finds the

crèche, the star of Bethelhem, the shepherds and their flocks, and the three kings bearing gifts, the manger with its surrounding animals, advent candles and calendars, sacred music and hymns, religious greeting cards, midnight Mass, and other religious devotions, traditions and expressions of faith.

Christmas is a season of love, hope and brilliant light. We are left in darkness without light. We are left with despair and meaninglessness without hope. We are left with coldness and emptiness without the warmth of love. Christmas brings us love, hope and ultimate meaning for our life, a return to God who reached down to us since we were lost and unable to find our way home. As remarkable as it sounds, the birth of Jesus shows the overpowering love of God for His human family. Let us praise and thank Him for that gift. Perhaps more so than ever.

What does all this mean in a world divided by pandemic mandates, conflicts, hatred, restrictions, loss of jobs, scorn for government, distrust of science and medicine, fear of a virus, fear of climate change, migration and refugee pressures, racism and economic inequalities, CRISPR technology and artificial intelligence, wars and hunger? In an age when the rights and dignity of the individual human being are being undermined and disrespected in numerous ways we need to remind ourselves and others that a human being, being made in the image of God should never be treated as a means to an end. Christmas is the reason.

Questions

1. What aspects of modern Christmas seem to make it a secularized celebration of commercialism, materialism, and hedonism?
2. Which aspects show a retention of Christmas as a spiritual feast day?
3. Which of these two views is gaining dominance in your opinion? What accounts for that?

PART B Reflections

Of course, over the centuries, societies have celebrated Christmas in many different ways. People have also pondered about Christmas and what it means to them. Here are a number of quotations some from notable public figures and others from anonymous ordinary folks expressing their feelings about Christmas, what it means to them or what bothers them about it.



- a) Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you. *Steve Maraboli*
- b) And when we give each other Christmas gifts in His name, let us remember that He has given us the sun and the moon and the stars, and the earth with its forests and mountains and oceans--and all that lives and move upon them. He has given us all green things and everything that blossoms and bears fruit and all that we quarrel about and all that we have misused--and to save us from our foolishness, from all our sins, He came down to earth and gave us Himself. *Sigrid Undset*
- c) Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home. *G.K. Chesterton*
- d) The giving of gifts is not something man invented. God started the giving spree when he gave a gift beyond words, the unspeakable gift of His Son. *Robert Flatt*
- e) He was born of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.

St. Augustine

- f) The Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this truth of the Incarnation. **J.I. Packer**
- g) Christmas is the season when we remember that Love is the greatest thing in the world... We make time to see friends and loved ones; to reaffirm the love we share with them, and to celebrate the holiday with them.
- h) Really, the overall level of collective neuroses rises, as do guilt, false expectations, and disappointment. It seems to have become a season to worship credit cards. To be honest, I don't look forward to fighting crowds of shoppers. They get in my way. I'm pressed for time. I hate them.
- i) Christmas is a celebration of life, of the most perfect life ever conceived, and of the family, the most blessed family ever gathered. It is a time for all people, not only Christians, to reflect on what it means to be born, to be human, to be loved, to be touched, to be humble.
- j) Nothing is as debilitating as homelessness. Home is where the heart is. To not have a home is to have one's heart ripped out. Nothing is worse than being homeless, for nothing is worse than losing one's heart. To be uprooted and displaced means to be removed from life itself. Advent reminds us that we are all homeless...If the saying is true—"the home is where the heart is"—then Jesus himself is our true home. We are home when Jesus shows his face to us. We are home when Jesus makes his home with us at Christmastime. **Hans Boersma**
- k) Christmas is only possible because of Mary and her embrace of the mystery of obedient freedom. ..Now God seeks to enter the world anew. He knocks at Mary's door. He needs human freedom. The only way he can redeem man, who was created free, is by means of a free "yes" to his will. In creating freedom, [God] made himself in a certain sense dependent upon man. His power is tied to the unenforceable "yes" of a human being. **George Weigel**
- l) Loneliness is the modern predicament and it's getting worse. ..Christmas reminds us what Christians have to say to this pervasive loneliness. We say "God is with us," as throughout the Christmas season we celebrate the divine answer to the Advent plea, "O come, o come Emmanuel." That plea did not go unrequited. We see the answer to it in the crèches in our homes. God is with us, not in awe and majesty, but in that most accessible of human forms, the baby who reaches out for our embrace. He is Emmanuel. He is God-with-us. We are not alone. **George Weigel**



- m) It is impossible to have (myself) a Merry Little Christmas....First, Christmas is not little: it busts every boundary, every mental wall. Second, nobody can be alone and be merry, because man was not meant to be alone. God must show up, because a Christmas without Christ is just a mass of historic associations more likely to depress us by their hollowness than a feast...Finally, and most gloriously, Christmas comes to the world even if the world only wants a census so that all the world can be taxed. Angels

appear and announce Christ was born on Christmas Day whether Caesar approves or not. We are invited to a feast, but the feast will happen even if we insist of sitting in our dark room listening to our sad music.
John Mark Reynolds

Questions for reflection in class. *Perhaps the teacher might wish to have students answer the questions in writing to encourage first a personal reflection (half a page) and then an open discussion could ensue. Teacher*

should encourage contribution from every student in the class in some fashion. A number of statements are presented dealing with the social, theological and historical aspects of Christmas. The statements should elicit considerable interest and could be the jumping off point for some sharing of views and classroom discussion. Rather than assigning all statements at once, the teacher may spread out the exercise over four or five weeks and introduce three or four statements at a time, as time permits. Or just choose five of the representative statements and have the class discussion all in one or two periods. This portion of the Christmas curriculum is meant for deeper reflection not as a fun-filled class activity that may be tempting in the very last days before Christmas break.

One lesson approach is to simply assign the following questions to the students in response to all the statements presented above. Another approach follow immediately the questions below. It suggests a structured method that might require more time, in fact likely several chunks of time that could be carved out of classe or homeroom periods if these are still being held given the unusual conditions prevailing in schools settings these days.

1. With which statements do you identify personally?
2. Which statements befuddle you?
3. Which statements gladden your spirit?
4. Which statements do you find most thought-provoking?
5. Which statement do you find deep and inspirational?
6. Based on your own experiences past and present what do you think is being celebrated at Christmas- greed, gluttony, and hedonism or love, hope, and charity?
7. What makes Christmas magical for you?
8. What aspects of modern Christmas would appear to be more a case for secularized celebration of commercialism, materialism, and hedonism?
9. “The true meaning of Christmas lies within each of us: and for each of us, it is a unique truth”.
Comment on this statement

Educational Goals: The general objective of this lesson is for all learners to (1) comprehend the “Thought for the Day Applicable to the Christmas Season” and (2) value the “thoughtful statements as they could apply to their lives, to their daily experiences, to their calling, and to their life goals within the challenges of the pandemic.

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Explain what the author’s quote is saying.
- Explain what the quote means to them.
- Consider how the quote may apply to their own celebration or understanding of Christmas.
- Explain why the quote is or is not important to them.

Teacher preparations and general lesson activities: The teacher should develop his or her own individual insights to the quotes and use personal examples and other allusions to help the learners through the exercise.

1. Write the “Thought for the Day” along with the source on the blackboard before class starts, or provide the quotes as a handout to the students at the beginning of class or in a power point method or project from computer.
2. Have the learners read the thought statements out loud and then read the thoughts to themselves.

3. The learner will then use the four key questions to ponder over the meaning, importance, and use of the thoughts
4. If time permits have students write responses to each of the questions, and allow approximately 25 minutes for writing.
5. Have the students discuss their insights with each other, and allow approximately 20 minutes for discussion.
6. Use the final 10 minutes to summarize the discussion and make important connections to curriculum learning expectations and to their relevance to the society we live in.

The Lesson Plan

Introduction: Have learners select the key words in the quote and ask what the words mean.

Body of Lesson: Read the “Thought for the Day”

Nothing is as debilitating as homelessness. Home is where the heart is. To not have a home is to have one’s heart ripped out. Nothing is worse than being homeless, for nothing is worse than losing one’s heart. To be uprooted and displaced means to be removed from life itself. Advent reminds us that we are all homeless...If the saying is true—“the home is where the heart is”—then Jesus himself is our true home. We are home when Jesus shows his face to us. We are home when Jesus makes his home with us at Christmastime. *Hans Boersma*

Read the quote and begin to think about the meaning of the quote. Think about how to use the four questions to help focus your thinking.

1. What is the author trying to say?

Put yourself in the author’s shoes to try to understand what he was saying. Who is the author of the quote? When did he live? Where did he live? What does this background information add to your proper understanding of the quote? Who was he speaking to? Why was it important for him to say this?

2. What does it mean to you?

Once you understand what the author was trying to say, then ask yourself, “What does it mean to me?” Think about yourself, your family, and general society. What if people do not agree with the spirit behind the thought? What does it say about the way we live and serve? Do you agree with the speaker?

3. Why is it important? Now, place your own personal meaning to the quote and think about the importance of what it means to you.

4. How can you use it? Think about how you can apply the message or concept to your life. Start to identify specific areas in your life where you can take action and improve the situation with your family, friends or neighbours. How can you show greater appreciation for each of them? How can we love our siblings more? Do we think about far-away needs to escape from what is in front of us? In seeking involvement in a cause greater than ourselves, do we sacrifice our responsibilities to our own family or friends? By serving the needs of people whom we do not know personally and who live hundreds or thousands of kilometres from us does this excuse us from serving the needs of our own family or friends? How can we help the homeless near or far?

Writing Component. The students can be directed to write their responses to the Four Questions raised above. You can ask the students to do this aspect of the lesson in a cooperative group mode. In either case you should circulate among the students, answering individual questions and offering encouragement to the groups.

Class Discussion Learners share their responses and discuss their insights. There are several ways to conduct this discussion. (1) Taking the first question, ask learners to share their responses. Continue in this mode question by question. (2) Have each group share all four of their responses at once. Provide positive feedback and help

relate the learners' responses to the quote. Encourage talk among individuals and between groups and call for feedback among the learners. A technique that works is to highlight the various choices of words to describe the quote. The teacher should write key words on the board as a visual reminder of learners' ideas and for the final summary of the work. The teacher should work with the *learners' thoughts and insights*.)

Conclusion and Close There is always something new to learn around us everyday, and sometimes the things and people that are closest to us are the least appreciated. This may especially apply to the demands of Christmas.

Summary: Invite the students to summarize what they have learned by this process. Learners should connect insights to previous learning, and the learning expectations announced earlier.

Each of the quotes can be considered and analyzed using the same process.

PART C The Super Christmas Quizzes

Quiz 1

There are many things and events associated with Christmas. In this quiz exercise we take a light-hearted look at the most festive of the Christian celebrations. These quiz items can be found online, but to make the quiz challenging and last over a period of days or weeks, it is suggested that a few rules be followed by students:

No use of smart phones to look up answers;

Work cooperatively in groups of 4 or 5 students;

Decide on a time limit for answering the questions; (20 minutes)

Have the groups hand in a written sheet with the answers for the group;

Correct answers are then read out loud for the entire class.

The teacher may wish to use only ten of the multiple questions each day or ten per week over the period of Advent. In this case, allow only 10 minutes for answering questions. This approach would stretch out the exercise and help to build up a feeling for the Christmas season, as something special, but with a light fun aspect as the days for prayer and reflection proceed through Advent.

1. Tchaikovsky's famous ballet performed around Christmas is called a) The Firecracker b) The Safecracker c) The Nutcracker d) none of these. _____
2. In 1647, the English parliament passed a law that made Christmas illegal. This was done under a) Oliver Cromwell b) William Peel c) Charles I d) Benjamin Disraeli. _____
3. The first Canadian Christmas carol was written in 1649 by a) Bishop Laval b) St. Jean de Brebeuf c) Jean Talon d) St. Marguerite Bourgeoys. _____
4. *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
5. Carols weren't sung in churches until they were introduced by a) Martin Luther b) Blaise Pascal c) Giovanni Palestrina d) J.S. Bach. _____
6. Jesus was born during the rule of the emperor a) Augustus Caesar b) Julius Caesar c) Constantine d) Nero. _____
7. In Quebec the Christmas Eve banquet is called a) *le réveillon* b) *le bon appétit* c) *le snack de minuit* d) *le petit déjeuner*. _____
8. In the song *Beginning to Look Like Christmas* what do Barney and Ben wish for? a) a pair of Leaf sweaters b) a pair of b-b guns c) a pair of hopalong boots d) a pair of new pyjamas. _____
9. St. Nicholas was actually born in a) the Netherlands b) Switzerland c) Turkey d) Malta. _____

10. Jesus was taken to Jerusalem eight days after His birth a) to be presented to the relatives b) to be dedicated to God c) to be named officially d) to register His birth. _____
11. The first “crèche” scene was originated by a) St. Anthony of Padua b) St Thomas Aquinas c) St. Dominic d) St. Francis. _____
12. Because of King Herod’s threats the Holy Family escaped to a) Numidia b) Ethiopia c) Saudi Arabia d) Egypt. _____
13. In Clement C. Moore’s poem *The Night Before Christmas* who was not stirring? a) the father b) the mother c) the mouse d) all of the above. _____
14. Mistletoe is from the Anglo-Saxon word *misteltan*, which means a) “little evergreen” as the plant stays green b) “little dung twig” because the plant spreads though bird droppings c) “sparkling leaf” as the plant shines d) “twinkle toe” as the plant is very delicate. _____
15. The author of *A Christmas Carol* was a) Mark Twain b) Charles Dickens c) Hans Christian Andersen d) Robert Louis Stevenson. _____
16. What happened to Zechariah because he did not believe the angel Gabriel’s words? a) he lost his position in the synagogue b) he got banished from Nazareth c) he became mute d) he became poor. _____
17. The first Christmas card was commissioned in 1843 by a) British prime minister William Gladstone b) Sir Henry Cole c) President Zachary Taylor d) Tzar Alexander II. _____
18. In the carol *The Twelve Days of Christmas* how many gifts are mentioned? a) 12 gifts b) 25 gifts c) 173 gifts d) 364 gifts. _____
19. Torrone , a nougat confection, typically made of honey, sugar, and egg white, coated in crushed, toasted almonds is a Christmas treat from a) France b) Italy c) Spain d) Brazil. _____
20. 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. _____
21. The cowboy who sang about the exploits of Rudolph the reindeer was a) Roy Rogers b) Hopalong Cassidy c) Tex Ritter d) Gene Autry. _____
22. 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. _____
23. Electric tree lights were invented in 1882 by Edward Johnson in a) New Zealand b) Australia c) U.S.A. d) Canada. _____
24. Postmen in Victorian England were popularly called "robins." This was because a) they carried red pouches as mail bags b) they chirped along the way happily as they delivered mail c) their bill caps were festooned with robins d) their uniforms were red. _____
25. In Dr. Seuss' book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" the dog that belonged to the Grinch was named a) Dagwood b) Pluto c) Max d) Gufus. _____
26. Yuletide originates from a) the Norse in Scandinavia who celebrated winter as each family burnt a giant log and feasted until it turned to ash b) people of Yule, an outport on the coast of Iceland, known for their eggnog c) the large ice capped waves that form off Newfoundland d) a period of celebration noted for spirited drinking.
27. The Canadian province that sells the most Christmas trees annually is a) Nova Scotia b) British Columbia c) Quebec d) Ontario. _____
28. The first beverage company that used Santa Claus during the winter season for promotional purposes was a) Canada Dry b) Coca Cola c) Dr. Pepper d) John Labatt. _____
29. What did the baby Jesus do when the little drummer boy played his drum for Him? a) clapped His hands b) smiled at him c) winked at him d) closed His eyes and fell asleep. _____
30. 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. _____
31. December 26 is known as *Boxing Day* because a) unwanted presents were often returned to the stores in boxes b) money was collected in alms-boxes placed in churches and distributed to the poor and needy after Christmas c) food stuffs were gathered as leftovers and stored in boxes for shipment d) none of the above. _____

32. In *Little Town of Bethlehem* what went by in its deep and dreamless sleep? a) the sleepy shepherds b) the silent stars go by c) the ages past d) rays of soft moonlight. ____
33. The first instrument on which the carol *Silent Night* was played was: a) a pipe organ b) a harp c) a guitar d) a violin. ____
34. The poinsettia, a traditional Christmas flower, originally grew in which country? a) China b) Egypt c) Mexico d) Brazil. ____
35. Which name does not belong to one of Santa's reindeer? a) Pretzel b) Donner c) Blitzen d) Comet. ____
36. A favorite Christmas story is Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in...* a) Ohio b) Quebec c) Wales d) Queensland. ____
37. George Frederick Handel's great Christmas oratorio, *The Messiah*, was first performed in 1742, in a) London b) Dublin c) Paris d) Berlin. ____
38. A modern Christmas custom borrowed from ancient Rome's New Year's celebrations is a) hanging stockings by the chimney b) serving seafood, specifically cod on the eve c) decorating an evergreen tree d) displaying a wreath on the front door of one's house. ____
39. What three characters sing "*The Chipmunk Song*"? a) Melvin, Teddy, and Stevie b) Alvin, Theodore, and Simon c) Huey, Louie, and Dewey d) Big Bird, Ernie and Bert. ____
40. The first people to be told of Jesus' birth were a) the friends of Herod b) the innkeeper and his wife c) shepherds watching their flock d) the wise men. ____
41. The liturgical colour of the season of Advent is a) gold b) green c) white d) purple. ____
42. Joseph went to Bethlehem because a) he was a descendant of David b) he paid taxes in that town c) his carpentry shop was there d) the Jewish records were kept there. ____
43. In the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* what role did Jimmy Stewart play? a) Jack Jones b) Sylvester Stone c) George Bailey d) Willard Branks. ____
44. The O. T. prophet most associated with Advent is a) Hosea b) Jeremiah c) Isaiah d) Samuel. ____
45. *The Miracle on* ----- happened on what street in the movies? a) Wilhelmstrasse b) Gorky Park Circle c) Fifth Avenue d) 34th Street. ____
46. Who uttered 'Bah, humbug' to express disgust with Christmas charity? a) Silas Marner b) Ebenezer Scrooge c) The Grinch d) Fred Flintstone. ____
47. 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. ____
48. Who is officially credited as the author of *Auld Lang Syne*? a) Robert Burns b) Henry Longfellow c) Dylan Thomas d) Robert Frost. ____
49. The rap song *Christmas in Harlem* was a contribution by a) Kanye West b) Drake c) Ariana Grande d) none of the above. ____
50. This Canadian band was famous for its New Year's Eve celebration on radio and television a) Bare Naked Ladies b) The Tragically Hip c) The Royal Canadians d) The Arkells

Answers

1 c 2 a 3 b 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 a 8 c 9 c 10 b 11 d 12 d 13 d 14 b 15 b 16 c 17 b
 18 d 19 b 20 a 21 d 22 c 23 c 24 a 25 c 26 a 27 a 28 b 29 b 30 a 31 b 32 b
 33 c 34 c 35 a 36 c 37 b 38 d 39 b 40 c 41 d 42 a 43 c 44 c 45 d 46 b
 47 c 48 a 49 a 50 c

Quiz 2

Christmas Songs and Carols

From mid-November until the end of December we are inundated with Christmas music when out shopping or watching television or being online. We recognize the tunes and sometimes we even know the titles of the songs or carols. But suppose Christmas songs and carols had to be described scientifically or literally. Below are some of these traditional tunes describing some aspect of Christmas whether its spiritual meaning, historical lore, the weather, or the personalities. Can you identify the familiar songs and carols by dry alternate technical titles? Have some fun and try guessing these riddled names. The teacher may want to encourage students to create their own alternate technical titles. See who can be the most creative.



1. Boulder of the tinkling metal spheres.
2. The lad is a diminutive percussionist.
3. Festoon the entryways.
4. Cup-shaped instruments fashioned of a whitish metallic element.
5. Oh small Israel urban center.
6. Far off in a haybin.
7. We are Kong, Lear, and Nat Cole from the East.
8. Duodecimal enumeration of time equal to the time elapsed two consecutive returns of the same terrestrial meridian to the sun during the yuletide season.
9. Our fervent hope is that you thoroughly enjoy your nativity season.
10. Listen, the winged heavenly messengers are vocalizing melodically.
11. As the guardians of the woolly animals protected their charges in the dark hours.
12. I beheld a trio of nautical vessels.
13. Jubilation to the entire terrestrial globe.
14. Do you perceive the same vibrations which stimulate my auditory sense organ?
15. May the Supreme Being bestow refreshing inactivity to happy male humans.
16. Uncouth dolf with short rose-colored proboscis.
17. Celestial attendants of God we perceived with our ears on extreme elevation.
18. Cheerful wish for December 25 en espagnol.
19. Hymn of the NorthWestern branch of the Iroquoian family.
20. Arrived at twelve o'clock when the sky was pellucid.
21. Allow precipitation of water vapor in the air.
22. Male infant of Joseph's betrothed.
23. Approach, approach You who art with God.
24. Dark time of the day is muted.
25. Interrogatory concerning progeny?
26. Adult male person composed of packed ice crystals lacking warmth of feeling.
27. The original yule season.
28. Sacred period of darkness when the sun is not out.
29. An area of ground noted for its trifles for diversionary purposes.
30. Join us thou long-anticipated Saviour.
31. Natal celebration devoid of color as a hallucinatory phenomenon for me
32. Bipedal traveling through an amazing acreage from December 21st to March 21st
33. Castanea cooking in dry heat.
34. Salutation in Latin to Joseph's wife.
35. Move hitherward the entire assembly of those who are loyal in their belief.



Answers to Songs and Carols Quiz

1. Jingle Bell Rock
2. The Little Drummer Boy
3. Deck the Halls
4. Silver Bells
5. O Little Town of Bethlehem
6. Away In a Manger
7. We Three Kings of Orient Are
8. Twelve Days of Christmas
9. We Wish You a Merry Christmas
10. Hark the Herald Angels Sing
11. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks
12. I Saw Three Ships
13. Joy to the World
14. Do You Hear What I Hear?
15. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
16. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
17. Angels We Have Heard on High
18. Feliz Navidad
19. The Huron Carol
20. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
21. Let It Snow
22. Mary's Boy Child
23. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
24. Silent Night
25. What Child Is This?
26. Frosty the Snowman.
27. The First Noel.
28. O Holy Night.
29. Toyland
30. Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
31. I'm dreaming of a White Christmas
32. Winter Wonderland
33. Chestnuts Roasting
34. Ave Maria
35. O Come All Ye Faithful



Quiz 3

Complete the Lines

Everyone knows Christmas carols and other songs associated with Christmas. Let's see how well you know these songs. 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) Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh,



ANSWERS

Quiz #3

- 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) O'er the fields we go,
Laughing all the way.



QUIZ 4

These corny puns and riddles are meant more for younger students, but high schoolers may also enjoy.

1. What do elves eat on Christmas eve?
2. What Christmas carol is a perennial favourite of tired parents?
3. Why does Santa have 3 gardens?
4. What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
5. What was so good about the neurotic doll the girl was given for Christmas?
6. Why did Santa spell Christmas N-O-E?
7. What did the guest sing at the Inuit New Year's party?
8. What did one angel say to the other?
9. Why did Santa push his bed into the fireplace?
10. Why did the gingerbread man go to the doctor?
11. What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas Tree?
12. What do monkeys sing at Christmas time?
13. What do Christmas trees and bad knitters have in common?
14. What would you get if you ate the Christmas decorations?
15. What do you call a letter that is sent up the chimney on Christmas eve?
16. Who makes toy guitars and sings, "Blue Christmas?"
17. Which of Santa's reindeer now works for Proctor and Gamble?
18. Where do snowmen keep their money?
19. How do you know when Santa's in the room?
20. Why did Bobby's grades drop after the holidays?

Answers to Christmas riddles

1. Elf-abet soup.
2. Silent Night.
3. So he can hoe, hoe, hoe!
4. Frosted Flakes.
5. It was already wound up.
6. Because the angel had said, "No L!"
7. Freeze a jolly good fellow....
8. Halo there.
9. He wanted to sleep like a log.
10. He was feeling crummy.
11. A pineapple.
12. Jungle Bells, Jungle bells.
13. They both drop their needles.
14. Tinselitis,
15. Blackmail.
16. Elfis Presslee
17. It's true! Comet cleans sinks!
18. In a snowbank.
19. You can sense his presents.
20. Because everything was marked down!

<http://www.jokeschristmas.com/Christmas-Puns/>

<http://www.gomilpitas.com/humor/164.htm>

<https://www.squiglysplayhouse.com/JokesAndRiddles/Christmas.php>



Remember my birthday

Remember my birthday? As you well know, we are getting closer to my birthday. Every year there is a celebration in my honour and I think that this year the celebration will be repeated.

During this time there are many people shopping for gifts, there are many radio announcements, TV commercials, and in every part of the world everyone is talking that my birthday is getting closer and closer. It is really very nice to know, that at least once a year, some people think of me.

As you know, the celebration of my birthday began many years ago. At first people seemed to understand and be thankful of all that I did for them, but in these times, no one seems to know the reason for the celebration. Family and friends get together and have a lot of fun, but they don't know the meaning of the celebration.

I remember that last year there was a great feast in my honour. The dinner table was full of delicious foods, pastries, fruits, assorted nuts and chocolates. The decorations were exquisite and there were many, many beautifully wrapped gifts. But, do you want to know something? I wasn't invited. I was the guest of honour and

they didn't remember to send me an invitation. The party was for me, but when that great day came, I was left outside, they closed the door in my face.....and I wanted to be with them and share their table.

In truth, that didn't surprise me because in the last few years, all close their doors to me. Since I was not invited, I decided to enter the party without making any noise. I went in and stood in a corner. They were all drinking; there were some who were drunk and telling jokes and laughing at everything. They were having a great time. To top it all, this big fat man all dressed in red wearing a long white beard entered the room yelling Ho-Ho-Ho! He sat on the sofa and all the children ran to him, saying : "Santa Claus, Santa Claus"... as if the party were in his honour!

At 12 midnight all the people began to hug each other . I extended my arms waiting for someone to hug me and....do you know no one hugged me. Suddenly they all began to share gifts. They opened them one by one with great expectation. When all had been opened, I looked to see if, maybe, there was one for me. What would you feel if on your birthday, everybody shared gifts and you did not get one? I then understood that I was unwanted at that party and quietly left.

Every year it gets worse. People only remember to eat and drink, the gifts, the parties and nobody remembers me. I would like this Christmas that you allow me to enter into your life. I would like that you recognize the fact that almost two thousand years ago I came to this world to give my life for you, on the cross, to save you. Today, I only want that you believe this with all your heart.

I want to share something with you. As many didn't invite me to their party, I will have my own celebration, a grandiose party that no one has ever imagined, a spectacular party. I'm still making the final arrangements. Today, I am sending out many invitations and there is an invitation for you. I want to know if you wish to attend and I will make a reservation for you and write your name with golden letters in my great guest book. Only those on the guest list will be invited to the party. Those who don't answer the invitation, will be left outside. Do you know how you can answer this invitation? It is by extending it to others whom you care for... I'll be waiting for all of you to attend my party this year... See you soon....I love you!

Jesus

Questions The invitation is always there, but we have to answer to be able to attend and welcomed in to the party.

1. What is the surface message in this letter?
2. How does Jesus gently rebuke the party-goers?
3. What is the deeper spiritual message?
4. How can you have a party without the guest of honour?
5. How should we celebrate Christmas?
6. What is Christ's ultimate party celebration?

Lessons/Resources

There are many sites on the internet that present ready-made theme lessons and ideas to help teachers instruct and inspire students about the meaning of Christmas.

Site 1

One such site rich with lesson ideas especially for primary and junior grades is

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/Christmas.htm> .

Suggested lesson activity for language arts class. Writing a letter or short story (one page, or 200 words in length) on the theme of Christmas. Some suggested topics

1. Write a letter to the Grinch and tell him why he should get the Christmas spirit.
2. Do we need a break from Christmas or from the secularized materialism that goes on forever?
3. Think about Christmas dinners past. What was your most dreaded food that would be made and you did not want to eat?
4. You went to bed Christmas Eve 2021 and woke up Christmas Day 2051. What might be surprising?

5. Christmas has here and your family just won a lottery.
6. Christmas has been cancelled because of a pandemic.
7. Forced to spend Christmas in another country.
8. Acts of charity at Christmas.

Site 2

<https://www.teacherplanet.com/pages/calculate-cost-12-days-christmas> cost of true love Christmas gifts mentioned in the song The Twelve Days of Christmas. A very good exercise for grade nine students in a math class. There are some very creative ideas in implementing this math exercise with a Christmas theme. It may serve to point out the dangers of materialism/consumerism as well.

Site 3

<https://www.teachervision.com/short-stories/o-henrys-the-gift-of-the-magi> still a good exercise for appreciation of love, charity, sacrifice and giving of gifts.





Christmas Word Search



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
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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
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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

INCARNATION

DAVID

JOSEPH

GABRIEL

MAGI

BETHLEHEM

AUGUSTUS

MISTLETOE

CIRCUMCISION

SIMEON

ANNE

TINSEL

TEMPLE

CHRISTMAS

ADVENT

SLEIGH

KING

MYRRH

POINTSETTIA

PUDDING

HEROD

INN

CAROLS

LOVE

BELLS

RUDOLPH

NOEL

REVEILLON

SHEPHERDS

HOLY

MARY

EGYPT

MANGER

BLESSING

TREE

MERRY

JOY

PROPHETS

IN EXCELSIS

EMMANUEL

FROSTY

CRECHE

SHOPPING

FEAST

RIBBON

GINGER

GIFTS

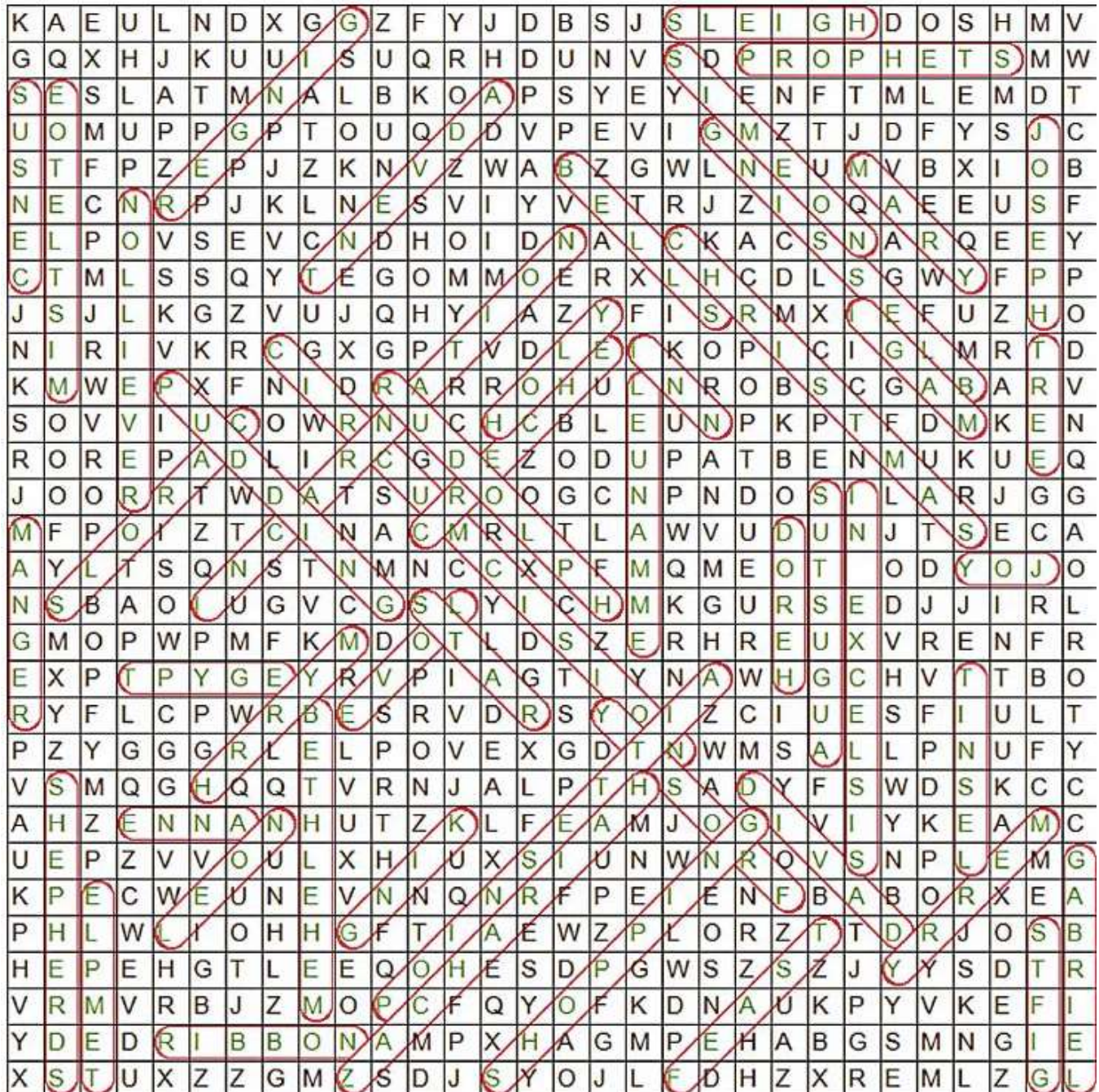
STAR

CENSUS

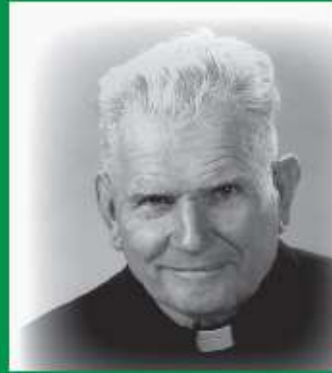
ZACHARIAH



Christmas word search solution



FATHER TED COLLETON SCHOLARSHIP



Niagara Region Right to Life is once again pleased to offer The Father Ted Colleton Scholarship essay contest as part of its mandate to reach out to society in an educational format. In particular, Niagara Region Right to Life wishes to help educate and inform the younger generation about the preciousness and possibilities of human life from conception to natural death and how certain threats affect those possibilities in its beginnings.

All students in grade 11 or 12, attending a Canadian high school (or being home schooled in Canada) are invited to participate.

Three prizes of \$2000 (1st), \$1500 (2nd) and \$1000 (3rd) respectively will be awarded. Candidates are required to submit a personal profile, a letter of recommendation and a 1200 word essay on the theme outlined below:

Describe how one could help build a *culture of life* (one that uncompromisingly respects and cherishes the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death). Your suggestions may range from a plan to protect the conscience rights of both current health professionals and of those contemplating medical studies - to more effective regulations regarding biomedical research, or from new peaceful public activism - to more effective strategies in the various fields of communication. This is an open-ended, non-exhaustive list.

**SUBMIT DOCUMENTS VIA EMAIL BY
DECEMBER 1, 2021**

Email: dirocco@theinterim.com

Or leave a message for Dan Di Rocco at
(416) 204-1687