

The Interim Plus + + + + +

Curriculum Learning Resource

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Editor: Dan Di Rocco

Part A: Introduction to Christmas 2022

pages 1-3

Part B: Reflections of Some Saints on Christmas

pages 3-4

Part C: The Economics of Christmas and Assorted Other Concerns

pages 5-6

Part D: Analysis of Christmas Carols/Music

pages 7-9

Part E: Christmas Quizzes and Crossword

pages 10-16

Part F: Final Reminder of Father Ted Colleton Scholarship Deadline

page 17

Merry Christmas Greeting

Part A An Introduction to Christmas 2022

This final curriculum resource for calendar year 2022 will focus on the celebration of Christmas in our society. We shall delve into the spiritual, cultural and also the economic aspects of the great feast. Also included is a final reminder of the deadline for the Father Ted Colleton scholarship and essay contest for grades 11-12 high school students.

In Canada today, despite an increasingly secular environment (one hostile to religious beliefs and expressions of faith) we are still free to celebrate pretty well anything we want, whenever we want. We should be glad that we can celebrate the birth of Jesus, for as the angel announced the really “Good news” of Jesus’ birth would bring “great joy” to “all the people”.



As Pope Benedict XVI said in Christmas message “Christmas is a universal feast. Even those who do not profess to be believers, in fact, can perceive in this annual Christian celebration something extraordinary and transcendent, something intimate that speaks to the heart. It is the feast that sings of the gift of life. The birth of a child moves us and causes tenderness. Christmas is the encounter with a newborn who cries in a miserable cave. Contemplating him in the manger, how can we not think of so many children who even today see the light from within a great poverty in many regions of the world? How can we not think of the newborns who are not welcomed and are rejected, of those who do not survive because of a lack of care and attention? How can we not think, too, of the families who desire the joy of a child and do not see this hope fulfilled?”



Pope Benedict went on to say that “At Christmas, then, we are not limited to commemorating the birth of a great personality; we do not celebrate simply and in the abstract the mystery of the birth of man or in general, the birth of life; neither do we celebrate only the beginning of a great season. At Christmas, we remember

something very concrete and important for man, something essential for Christian faith, a truth that St. John summarized in these few words: "The Word was made flesh."

At the time of Christ's birth humanity was suffering and at a crossroads. God, the creator of life saw the entire human family in grave danger, ever since that original disobedience of the first parents, Adam and Eve. God did not tell us to find our own way out of the mess we as fallen creatures had created. *He came down to where we were and rescued us.* That's what Christmas is all about—God's coming down to rescue us, to do whatever it took to deliver us from sure death. He sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from our terrible predicament and to offer a way out. God chose to come down to earth to dwell among us.

So we need to be thankful for this totally unexpected and momentous event. It is a joyous occasion absolutely worthy of celebration to the nth degree. Indeed, Christmas is one of those holidays that is observed by all people, even those who are not Christian believers for it honors family love, warmth, joy, and selflessness. We can enjoy Christmas in all of its glory with our children, families, friends.

But as we discover, not everyone finds the Christmas season itself a happy one. Christmas reminds us of poverty and the need for charity. We may be fortunate to have a good family, a secure home in which to live, and bounteous healthy food to nourish us. The reality is that not everyone has a support group or are members of a close knit family, nor are they able to enjoy such other basics.

But, rather than take things for granted, perhaps we need to reflect more deeply about why and how we can contribute to making the celebration more meaningful and uplifting for others as well as for ourselves. We have the opportunity to live out our faith and experience the joy of giving in so many ways: taking part in toy drives, food drives, donating to food banks; visiting shut-ins, inviting strangers to our homes, serving at a shelter, spending time with an elderly neighbour who doesn't have family; writing and sending a personal greeting card or letter, making a phone call; go carolling, prepare a Christmas skit, attending Christmas Eve service at church, actually listen to the words and music of the songs and carols played incessantly during the Christmas season.



We can take advantage of the Advent period as an opportunity to reflect, a chance to reset ourselves spiritually, and clean up our spiritual mess and resolve to do better by following Jesus' example of love. To many people, and in some way to all of us, Christmas seems too beautiful to be true, and yet there is meaning, and as Pope Benedict affirms, this meaning is not an impotent protest against the absurd. The Meaning is powerful: It is God who is infinite love.

Questions for reflection

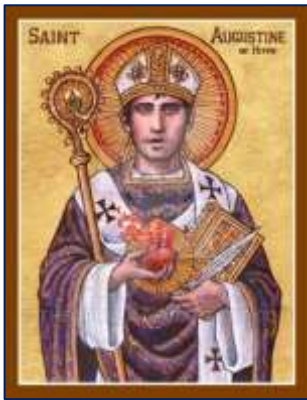
1. Write your own two paragraphs response to the introduction.
2. Overall, do you look forward to the Christmas season with great anticipation or do you dread the whole experience? Why?

Resources

<https://latestnews.fresherslive.com/articles/10-reasons-why-we-celebrate-christmas-celebrate-christmas-cheerfully-knowing-the-reasons-why-we-celebrate-christmas-315862> <https://www.gotquestions.org/why-celebrate-Christmas.html>

Part B Reflections of Some Saints on Christmas

Poets, novelists, politicians, athletes, celebrities have proffered their own ideas and/or feelings about Christmas throughout the ages. In this section is highlighted the insights of people who were devout true believers. There is much to be learned from their reflections.



St Augustine of Hippo (354-430): *Man's maker was made man, that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that the Truth might be accused of false witness, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die.*

St John Chrysostom (347-407): *This day He Who Is, is born; and He Who Is becomes what He was not.*

St Ambrose of Milan (340-397): *Open wide your door to the one who comes. Open your soul, throw open the depths of your heart to see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the sweetness of grace. Open your heart and run*

to meet the Sun of eternal light that illuminates all men.

St Anthony of Padua (1195-1231): *O Father, in your Truth (that is to say, in your Son, humbled, needy and homeless) you have humbled me. He was humbled in the womb of the Virgin, needy in the manger of the sheep, and homeless on the wood of the Cross. Nothing so humbles the proud sinner as the humility of Jesus Christ's humanity.*



St. Anthony

St Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386): *Teacher of children became himself a child among children, that he might instruct the unwise. The Bread of heaven came down to earth to feed the hungry.*

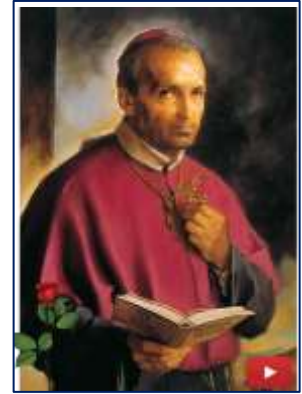


St Leo the Great

St Gregory Nazianzen (329-390): *Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ from heaven, go out to meet Him! Christ on earth, be exalted! Sing to the Lord all the whole earth; and that I may join both in one word, let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, for Him who is of heaven and then of earth. Christ in the flesh, rejoice with trembling and with joy; with trembling because of your sins, with joy because of your hope.*

St Leo the Great (400-461): *Dearly beloved, today our Saviour is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness. No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all.*

St Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787): *Arise, all ye nobles and peasants; Mary invites all, rich and poor, just and sinners, to enter the cave of Bethlehem, to adore and to kiss the feet of her new-born Son. Go in, then, all ye devout souls; go and see the Creator of heaven and earth on a little hay, under the form of a little Infant; but so beautiful that he sheds all around rays of light. Now that he is born and is lying on the straw, the cave is no longer horrible, but has become a paradise. Let us enter; let us not be afraid.*



St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153): *Awake, you who lie in the dust, awake and give praise. Behold, the Lord cometh with salvation. He comes with salvation, He comes with unction, He comes with glory. Jesus cannot come without salvation, Christ cannot come without unction, nor the Son of God without glory. For He Himself is salvation, He is unction, He is glory, as it is written, "A wise son is the glory of his father."*

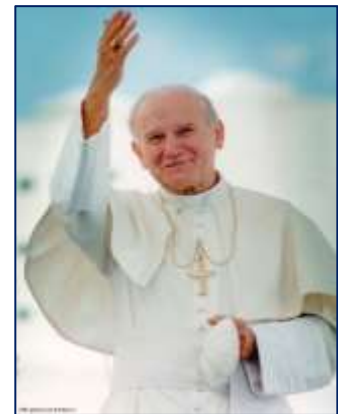


St Peter Chrysologus (380-450): *Christ's birth was not necessity, but an expression of omnipotence, a sacrament of piety for the redemption of men. He who made man without generation from pure clay made man again and was born from a pure body. The hand that assumed clay to make our flesh deigned to assume a body for your salvation. That the Creator is in his creature and God is in the flesh brings dignity to man without dishonour to him who made him. Why then, man, are you so worthless in your own eyes and yet so precious to God?*

St. John the Apostle (6 - 100): *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."*

St. John the Apostle

St. John Paul II (1920-2005): *"If we celebrate with such solemnity the birth of Jesus, it is to bear witness that every human being [is] somebody unique and unrepeatable...somebody thought of and chosen from eternity, some[one] called and identified by his own name. It is as it was with the first man, Adam. It is as it was with the new Adam, born of the Virgin Mary in the cave at Bethlehem: 'You shall call his name Jesus.'"*



St. John Paul II

Questions for further reflection

1. What essential Christian beliefs are found in each of these statements by Christian saints?
2. Which of these saintly reflections touches you the most and why?
3. Given these expressions, how and why is Christmas the most human life-affirming feast at its core?

Resources

<https://catholicinsight.com/christmas-according-to-the-saints/>
<https://forallsaints.wordpress.com/2011/03/18/cyril-bishop-of-jerusalem-386/>
<https://scepterpublishers.org/blogs/scepter-blog-corner/saint-leo-the-great-christmas-reflection>
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/249965/12-saints-quotes-about-the-true-meaning-of-christmas>
<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/christmas-reflection.html>
<https://mycatholic.life/books/catholic-daily-reflections-series/advent-and-christmas-reflections/christmas-season/>
<https://sosf.org/a-reflection-on-christmas/>
<https://blogs.sjcme.edu/theology/thomas-merton-reflections-on-the-meaning-of-advent-and-christmas/>

Part C The Economics of Christmas

Not everyone looks forward to Christmas for various reasons. These critics find certain aspects of the whole Christmas season problematic. What are their concerns? In this section we present some of the most common ones. Perhaps by taking some of these cautions to heart we may celebrate the season with a better appreciation of the joy and perhaps avoid the pitfalls that accompany the celebrations.

Dexter B. Wakefield, in a 2014 article (<https://www.tomorrowworld.org/magazines/2014/november-december/the-economics-of-christmas>) commented that Christmas can be “make or break” for retailers and that creative marketers find numerous ways to create a longer selling season, because it means that more of consumers’ hard-earned cash is



available to buy their products. The economics of this is simple as he explains: *If customers are not saving during the year for Christmas purchases—which is the case for most people—they will likely have to finance their purchases with either existing wages or credit card debt. So having a three or four month selling season brings in more sales than marketing in December only—hence, we see what retailers call “Christmas Creep.” The holiday marketing season “creeps” into*

November, October or earlier if merchants can get away with it.

He went on to illustrate the important marketing tactic used to generate “Christmas spirit” in the stores and shopping districts namely ----- holiday decorations and seasonal music—usually of a secular sort to avoid offending the non-religious or people of other non-Christian faiths.

Then, of course, there are big year-end sales to exploit the Christmas bonuses employers often give to their employees. Parents and others are often made to feel guilty if the children don’t have “a big Christmas” and the result is over-extending themselves financially on Christmas for emotional reasons.

Credit card companies love this, as such debts really spike at Christmas. Personal finance experts call this accumulation of expensive debt the “Holiday Debt Hangover.” Credit repair firms who advise debt consolidation also love this sad shopping binge situation.

Apparently “consumer counseling agencies see a 25 percent increase in the number of people seeking help in January and February”.

Personal finance experts agree that “there are times when incurring credit card debt makes sense, but holiday gift-buying is not one of them.” Such profligate use of credit cards too often leads to impulse spending, overspending, and increased debt, not a healthy financial outcome.

However, some people are bothered by Christmas festivities for a different reason, the purported pagan origins of Christmas. They claim that Sun-worshipping cultures had an important festival around the end of December to celebrate the winter solstice and the beginning of the slow ascent of the sun’s arc in the sky. These celebrations were very popular in the Roman Empire, and after the emperor Constantine adopted Christianity, the new faith was grafted on to existing cultural practices to help create popular support for Constantine’s rule. These critics point out that the original winter festival developed and changed a lot over the centuries, but many pagan elements have survived, like partying, gift-giving and decorating with evergreens. These critics reject the celebration of Christ’s birth because the

feast is not based on the Bible. Their claim is that there is no mention in Scripture nor any command to mark Jesus' birth with such festivities.

Despite these drawbacks and various material, cultural and spiritual concerns, for nations located in the northern hemisphere, Christmas is welcomed as a much needed festival to celebrate light, joy and goodwill towards all precisely when the days are shortest and darkest. Many explode with a sense of joy in their rush to be the cause of someone's happiness through gift-giving, mindful of the fact that they themselves have received the greatest gift – life and the love of their Creator in sending his Son Jesus.

Resources cited

<https://www.tomorrowworld.org/magazines/2014/november-december/the-economics-of-christmas>

<https://www.aier.org/article/how-economics-can-ruin-christmas-in-a-good-way/>

<https://www.livemint.com/Money/dHCNzJiNNnBN6YqgT2wb1J/How-do-economists-view-Christmas.html>

<https://www.goderichsignalstar.com/opinion/editorials/the-meaning-of-christmas>

1. Which of the many lamentations expressed by Wakefield strike you as true and having merit? Which are exaggerated? What can be done about them?
2. What is meant by “Christmas creep”?
3. Briefly describe and comment on the different marketing strategies that you see deployed to increase spending at Christmas?
4. What financial service companies love the Christmas season and why?
5. How does the shopping frenzy turn the Christmas season into one of depression and low spirit for some people?
6. How might shopping and gift-giving be impacted in a cashless society? Might the changes have a negative or positive effect on the celebration of Christmas, or would things just go on as always?
7. According to Matt Yglesias, why are the various holiday food drives not necessarily a good idea?
8. Briefly explain Carden’s opinion that market forces often defy the good intentions of people wanting to donate charitably.
9. How and why can our charity be reduced to mere virtue-signalling?
10. From a practical economic sense do we produce too much and consume not enough? Does this period of high inflation suggest the opposite?
11. In conclusion why is it very difficult to be charitable in ways that actually benefit the people we’re trying to help?
12. On balance, in your view, is it better to give than to receive? Why?

More Resources Offering Reflections, Various Christian Denominations

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7339>

<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2020/12/18/a-series-of-short-reflections-for-christmas>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2020/12/the-light-between-us-reflections-on-a-socially-distanced-christmas/>

<https://www.anglican.ca/news/visits-and-carols/30013835/>

<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2021/12/25/reflection-for-christmas-day-by>

<https://pravoslavie.ru/67338.html#:~:text=A%20wonderful%20part%20of%20the,incarnation%20is%20on%20ful%20display.>

<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2009/12/orthodox-christmas-reflection-1.html>

Part D Analysis of Christmas Carols/Music

Music is a powerful tool for creating a mood. There is probably no better example than the overwhelming role of music, songs and carols that establish the vibrant and sometimes nostalgic feelings associated with the Christmas season, hopefully for the better. Here are two attempts to illustrate the meaning and power of music: the first is a long video worth viewing for its excellent explanation of such music, **Musical Reflections on the True Meaning of Christmas Presented by Anthony Coniglio** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKVYXuHN0-Q>); the second is a writing effort by Rob Durocher, a church music minister.

The Video

Coniglio has an interesting academic background in terms of what he has studied and his preparation for this role of music commentator. His presentation is absolutely excellent and teachers should make time for the video in any classes dealing with the meaning of Christmas. His presentation is original, evocative, and effective. He plays the carols/hymns on the piano and offers reflections as he introduces each Christmas song. It is suggested that the entire video be viewed over a period of two classes.

1. How does Coniglio show the deep meaning of Christmas from his theological perspective? Consider his explanation of each hymn and what deep message he derives from each one:
 - a) O Come, O Come Emmanuel
 - b) O Little Town of Bethlehem
 - c) Away in a Manger
 - d) O Holy Night



- e) God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
- f) Silent Night
- g) Hark The Herald Angels Sing
- h) O Come All Ye Faithful
- i) We Three Kings of Orient Are
- j) Joy to the World

2. Summarize how the content of each song presents the truth so coherently.
3. What is the essential message that Coniglio wishes to convey?
4. Comment on Coniglio's use of his varied academic background in providing his insights.



O Come, All Ye Faithful: A Christmas Carol Reflection

Rob Durocher takes a slightly different approach by concentrating on one particular carol and expounding on it in some detail, including when it was written and by whom it was composed. He explains the differences between carols and hymns. He analyzes the carol stanza by stanza.

I don't know about you, but there is always something so incredibly triumphant and soul stirring when we all join together to sing the wonderful Christmas carol, *O Come, All Ye Faithful* at the beginning of each Christmas Eve service of worship! As far back as I can remember, and that's a good long time, this has always been a carol that fills my musical senses and seals the deal for me that Christ became like us, fully human and that he became is the 'Word of the Father now in flesh appearing' and that we are extended a wonderful invitation to 'come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!'

We sometimes use the word Christmas *carol* instead of the word Christmas *hymn* because while hymns are traditional poems based on scripture or scriptural thought and have been around for centuries sung by congregations in worship, carols, are seasonal, festive songs. They are usually religious in nature and represent Christmas, Easter and Advent, and have a joyful and festive character to them. *O Come, All Ye Faithful* in a way is actually BOTH a hymn and a Christmas carol!

The text of *O Come, All Ye Faithful* is a little bit of a mystery. There are some that say the text goes as far back as the 13th century but when it first appeared in publication, it was called *Adeste Fidelis, laeti triumphantes!* The version that we are familiar with today is attributed to the 18th century hymnist, John Francis Wade. Wade (1711-1786) was a Catholic layman who left England to live in France following the Jacobean rebellion of 1745 (when the Catholic, exiled Stuart, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' grandson of former King James II who fled England at the glorious Revolution of 1688, tried to gain his ancestral throne of Scotland back from Protestant King George II of England. This was a time when England and Scotland were steadfastly Protestant and Catholics would often escape difficulties by fleeing to Europe for safety.) The text to Wade's carol was written in Latin because Latin was considered the language of academia in the 18th century.



O Come, All Ye Faithful! was translated into English in 1841 by Frederick Oakely, a former Anglican priest who converted to Roman Catholicism, and became a canon at Westminster and hymnals. Song books quickly adopted this newly translated Christmas carol. Oakley used four verses of the carol and 19th century hymnist William Brooke (1848 – 1917) added more some years later. The carol has evolved over subsequent years with stanzas falling away as other stanzas were added.

The tune *Adeste Fidelis* has been attributed to both Francis Wade and even to Frederick Oakely, with the refrain, *O come, let us adore him* being added later. Other possible composers have also been suggested like Thomas Arne, and John Reading. Another school of thought has this carol in a slightly different form

attributed to King John IV of Portugal a musician, king, composer, and lover of the arts who might have written the tune. Throwing a little more confusion upon the carol's history is the fact that *Adeste Fidelis* was also called the "Portuguese Hymn" since it was sung with great familiarity regularly in the Chapel of the Portuguese Embassy in London. Whatever its origination the carol has transcended borders and continues to be one of the best loved hymns and Christmas carols throughout the world.

In the first verse of the carol one hears the whisper of Luke 2:15 where the shepherds say "Let us go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass" which places us among the shepherds as they ran with joy to Bethlehem to see the newborn Holy child. We also join the great procession of the faithful as they once journeyed in their hearts to Bethlehem!

The original second verse echoes John 1:14 and references the second article of Nicaean Creed establishing a link that reaches back to the church of 325 A.D. to the Council of Nicaea where the Creed originates. This verse is also filled with very good theology!

*God of God, Light of Light, lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb.
Very God Begotten, not created. O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*

In verse three we join with the angel's chorus singing 'Glory to God, glory in the highest' (Luke 2:14),

*Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation; sing ye bright citizens of heaven above.
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest"!*

The final verse triumphantly joins all those in heaven above and earth below in greeting and adoring our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ at his incarnation as we sing:

*Yea Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus to thee be glory given!
WORD of the Father, now in flesh appearing. O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

In these days of pandemic, political dissatisfaction and issues of racial inequity, this simple Christmas carol, *O Come, All Ye Faithful* still speaks to us! Throughout these last nine months we've been encouraged to 'be bold and courageous,' but to also be faithful! Being bold means being faithful. Jesus came into a world that was upside down. He entered 'the midst of humanity that could have shocked his perfect nature.' It wasn't the rich and ennobled who went with haste to Bethlehem to 'see this thing which has come to pass', it was common shepherds and village folk. This was Jesus who would break bread with his friends and disciples, teach and preach from a mountainside, heal the sick, raise the dead, be misunderstood by his family, friends and the government of his day but would show us by his death and glorious resurrection that he was real and dynamic and that the power of his Gospel changes our lives giving us a newness that compels us to share this good news of salvation with others.

We are extended an invitation to 'come and behold him, born the king of angels,' an invitation for us to come to Jesus and find hope, forgiveness and life in him – this little child in a manger who now reigns supreme as King of kings and Lord of lords who reigns forever and ever. O COME, LET US ADORE HIM, CHRIST THE LORD!

<https://stjohns-salisbury.org/2020/12/11/o-come-all-ye-faithful-a-christmas-carol-reflection/>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=analysis+of+Christmas+music%2C+songs+and+carols+as+an+understanding+of+Christmas&ei=M99WY8TxDM6iptQP47WhyAQ&ved=0ahUKEwiE14z6xPn6AhVOKYkEHeNa>

The second link above takes you to many sites which provide the history and background of different carols and hymns. Have students choose one carol from the site and then answer the questions below.

Questions

1. How does Durocher's approach compare to that of Coniglio? Which do you prefer and why?
2. With respect to the individual carols chosen from the second site, when and by whom was the carol written?
3. In what language was it composed?
4. What theological truth does it emphasize?
5. Does music/carols/concerts capture the essence of Christmas and help you to understand and celebrate the joyous feast?

Additional Resources

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/entertainment/holiday-music-popularity/>

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/what-makes-christmas-music-so-christmassy/>

<https://www.npr.org/2010/12/17/132105539/a-final-lesson-on-the-meaning-of-christmas-carols>

http://www.woodpecker.com/blogs/christmas_music.html

<https://allendalebaptist.org/christmas-carols-theology>

Part E Christmas Corny Puns and Crossword

This section favours a lighter approach to the celebration of Christmas by highlighting some of the folk lore associated with Christmas. General knowledge is tested regarding familiar and not so familiar aspects of Christmas traditions. The quizzes can help students have some fun as preparations for Christmas break approaches. Not everyone likes corny jokes, so what. Try these seventeen sweets and let your students groan in class. Tell them they have to think outside the box.

What can proud parents all say on Christmas day?

Yes, our children are truly gifted!

What did the Gingerbread Man put on his bed?

A cookie sheet!

How did Scrooge win the football game?

The ghost of Christmas passed.

Why did the gingerbread man go to the doctor?

He was feeling crummy.

What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas Tree?

A pineapple



What is the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the regular alphabet?

The Christmas alphabet has no L.

What would you get if you ate the Christmas decorations?

Tinselitis.

Why did they ask the turkey to join the band?

He had the drum sticks.

What did the salt say to the pepper?

Season's Greetings.

What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas?

Thanks, I'll never part with it!

Why wasn't the turkey hungry at Christmas time?

Because he was stuffed





What do you call a letter that is sent up the chimney on Christmas eve?

Blackmail.

What do lions sing at Christmas?

Jungle bells.

What's the best present for a train conductor?

Platform shoes.

What are parents' favorite Christmas carol?

Silent Night.

Why does Santa have three gardens?

So he can hoe, hoe, hoe!

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

Frosted Flakes.

Why did Santa push his bed into the fireplace?

He wanted to sleep like a log.



What do reindeer say before they tell a joke?

This will sleigh you.

Did you hear that one of Santa's reindeer now works for Procter and Gamble?

It's true! Comet cleans sinks!

What do Christmas trees and bad knitters have in common?

They both lose their needles.

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve!

True or False

Choose true or false to correctly answer each statement. Test your knowledge of Christmas lore from around the world.

1. "The Firecracker" by Tchaikovsky is the name of the ballet performed around Christmas time each year.
2. The Friday and Saturday before Christmas are the two busiest shopping days of the year in North America..
3. In 1647, the English parliament passed a law that made Christmas illegal as such festivities were banned by Puritan leader, Oliver Cromwell.
4. December 26 commonly known as Boxing Day came about because money was collected in alms-boxes placed in churches during the festive season and the money was then distributed to the poor and needy after Christmas.
5. The first Canadian Christmas carol was written in 1649 by St. Jean de Brebeuf.
6. "Silent night" was written for an orchestra by a church organist.
7. According to tradition, giving a lump of coal in the stockings of naughty children comes from Italy.
8. Despite the tradition of three wise men paying homage to baby Jesus, the Bible never gives a number.
9. Carols weren't sung in churches until they were introduced by Martin Luther in the 16th century.
10. The word Noel derives from the French expression "les bonnes nouvelles" or "the good news".
11. The FBI labelled *It's A Wonderful Life* a "subversive" movie and charged that its use of a nasty, Scrooge-like businessman "was a common trick used by communists."
12. In Quebec the Christmas Eve banquet is called *a reveillon*.
13. Traditionally in Italy fifers announce the Christmas season coming down from the mountains of Abruzzo and Latium playing characteristic tunes on their bagpipes.
14. The real St. Nicholas was actually born in Switzerland.
15. There are 5 Sundays during the Advent season.
16. *Tourtière* is a French-Canadian meat pie usually made with ground pork and/or veal, or beef.
17. *Julmust* is a Swedish liqueur that is consumed at Christmas.
18. The angel Raphael appeared to Mary at the Annunciation.
19. The curious thing about the star seen by the Magi is that it was not constant.
20. At time of Jesus' birth lineage determined the city to which each Jew had to travel in order to be taxed.

Christmas carols and songs have lyrics that should be very familiar. Take this Christmas Music Quiz and Name the song!



1. "Round yon virgin mother and child": a) Jingle Bells b) Silent Night c) I'll Be Home For Christmas d) We Three Kings
2. "Bearing gifts we traverse afar": a) Do You Hear What I Hear? B) Winter Wonderland c) I'll Be Home For Christmas d) We Three Kings
3. "And Heaven and nature sing": a) Angels We Have Heard On High b) Joy to the World c) While Shepherds Watched d) White Christmas
4. "'Tis the season to be jolly": a) Deck the Halls b) Feliz Navidad c) Jingle Bells d) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
5. "God and sinners reconciled": a) O Come O Come Emmanuel b) The Christmas Song c) Hark the Herald Angels d) O Holy Night
6. "Disperse the gloomy clouds of night": a) Good King Wenceslas, b) O Come O Come Emmanuel c) Hark the Herald Angels d) The First Noel
7. "Joyful and triumphant": a) O Come All Ye Faithful b) Joy to the World c) We Three Kings d) Home for The Holidays
8. "Looked down where he lay": a) I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day b) O Little Town of Bethlehem c) Joy to the World d) Away in a Manger
9. "O tidings of comfort and joy": a) God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen b) Twelve Days Of Christmas c) Ding Dong Merrily on High d) Away in a Manger

10. "On a cold winter's night that was so deep": a) It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas b) The First Noel c) Ave Maria d) What Child Is This?
11. "Take a look in the five-and-ten, glistening once again." a) I saw Three Ships b) It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas c) It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year d) Silver Bells
12. "I want to wish you a merry Christmas!" a) I Saw Santa Kissing Mom b) Winter Wonderland c) Jingle Bell Rock d) Feliz Navidad



Answers to the True or False

1. False (it's The Nutcracker) 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True 6. False (written by the priest when the church organ broke down) 7. True 8. True 9. False (introduced by St. Francis of Assisi in the 13th century) 10. True 11. True 12. True 13. True 14. False (the historical St. Nicholas was a native of Turkey) 15. False (there are 4 Sundays during the advent season) 16. True 17. False (it is a Swedish soft drink) 18. False (It was angel Gabriel) 19. True 20. True

Answers to Christmas carols and songs lyrics

1.b 2.d 3.b 4.a 5.c 6.b 7.a 8.d 9.a 10.b 11.b 12.d

Answers to Christmas Movie Lore

1.d 2.c 3.c 4.b 5.b 6.b 7.c 8.c 9.b 10.c

Material was sourced on the internet, but also liberally adapted, plus original material developed by editor of The Interim Plus.

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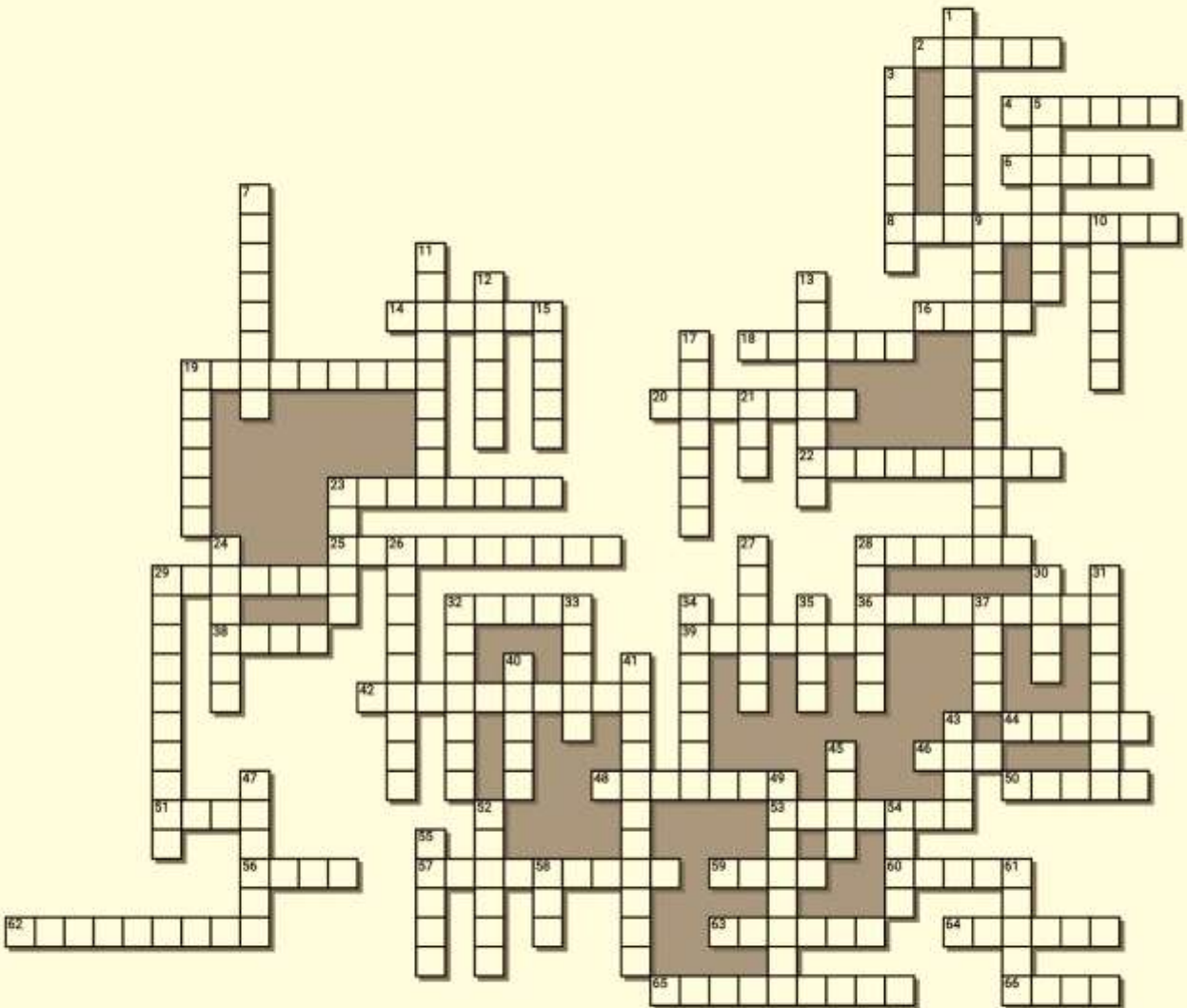


Name 2022 Christmas Crossword

Date _____

Class _____

2022 Christmas Crossword



Name 2022 Christmas Crossword

Date _____

Class _____

Across

2. white crystalline carbohydrate added to coffee
4. liturgical period preceding Christmas
6. where the élèves go Monday to Friday
8. author of The Brothers Karamazov
14. winged messengers from on high
16. tax collector who wrote a gospel
18. site of Christ's baptism, River _____
19. edible concoction of fruits and nuts
20. a circular band of flowers or foliage
22. a winter tradition roasting them on an open fire
23. Bob _____ Ebenezer Scrooge's underpaid nephew
25. belief in one God
28. French for crib
29. Italian nougat sweet
32. The New Testament was written in this language
36. Location of legendary workshop of Santa
38. might blacken Santa as he comes down
39. the angel was the bearer of glad _____
42. ability to fly enjoyed by some saints
44. This ancestor of Jesus wrote lots of psalms
46. boundless exultation
48. department store santa who goes on trial, Kris _____
50. "Chapter and _____"
51. Moses floated on it as a baby
53. the archangel who led the battle against Satan
56. the wise men who sought out baby Jesus
57. Mary visited her immediately after the angel appeared to her
59. sky wanderer
60. host land for refugee Holy Family
62. God Rest Ye Merry, _____
63. The City of God was written in the _____ century
64. French cake
65. parasitic plant which grows on apple, oak, and other broadleaf trees and bears white glutinous berries in winter
66. type of history

Down

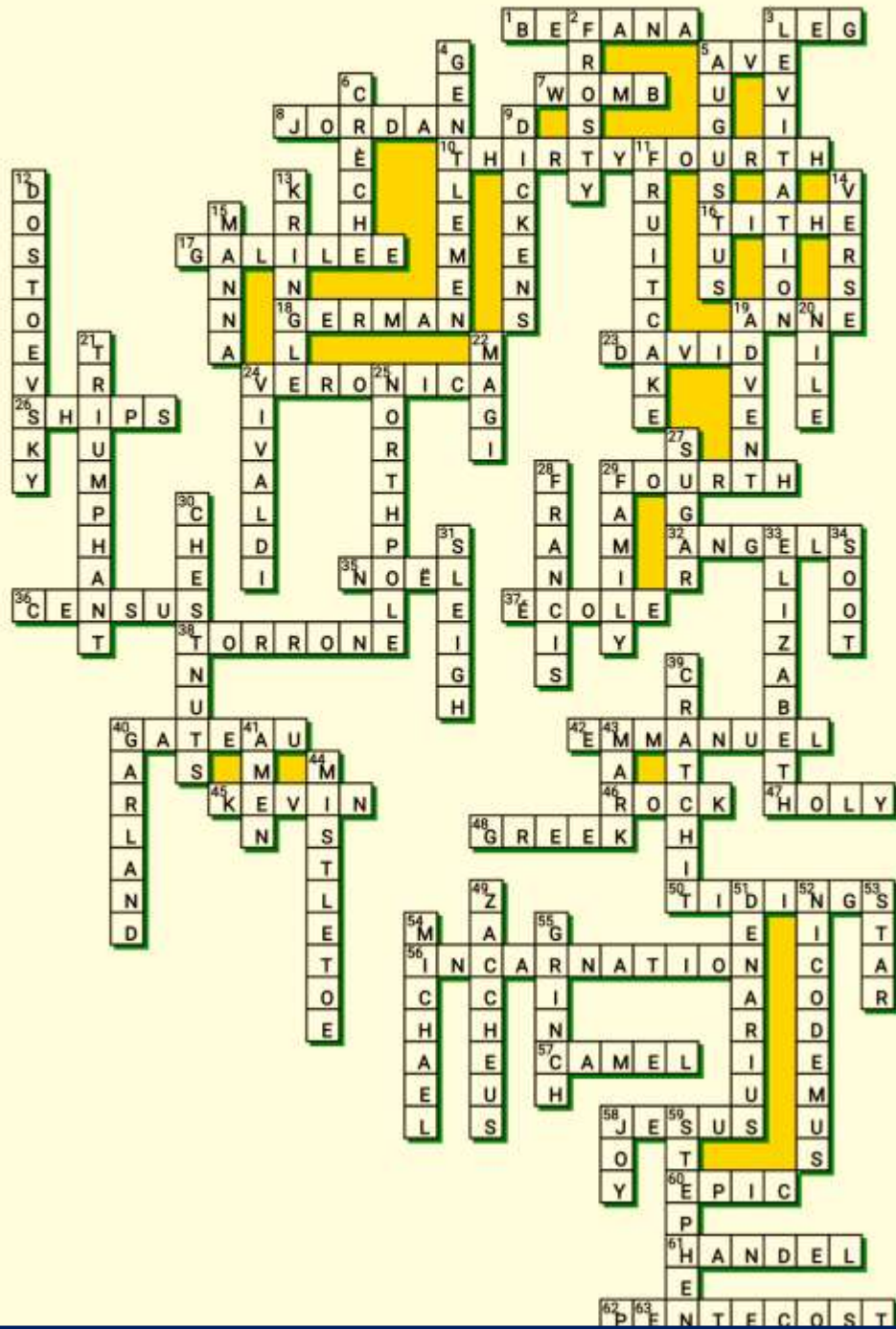
1. eighth month is named after him
3. priest composer of the Four Seasons, Antonio _____
5. author of A Christmas Carol
7. tax-collector who climbed the sycamore tree to see Jesus
9. New York street where the "miracle" happened
10. mode of conveyance for Santa
11. event when Holy Spirit came as a tongue of fire
12. delivers the gifts to children in Italy
13. she dried the face of Jesus with her veil
15. a caroling favourite, I Saw Three _____
17. introduced the first creche, St. _____
19. basic cell of civilization under attack today
21. In the film A Christmas Story lamp was in the shape of a _____
23. dromedary means of transport
24. white winter fellow with carrot for a nose
26. member of Sanhedrin who visited Jesus by night seeking truth
27. composed The Messiah, George _____
28. taking stock of the inhabitants
29. O Come All ye Faithful, Joyful and _____
30. "The child leaped in her _____"
31. Roman currency used at time of Jesus
32. Inland biblical sea
33. The McCallister child left Home Alone was _____
34. This saint's feast day is the 26th of December
35. the mother of the Virgin Mary
37. sanctified, sacred
40. what the Hebrews ate while wandering in the desert
41. enfleshing of the God-man
43. Christmas en français
45. the wise man built his house on this
47. original Silent Night was written in this language
49. O Come O Come _____, advent song
52. fictional character who "stole" Christmas
54. so be it
55. He is the Alpha and the Omega
58. Latin salutation to Joseph's wife
61. donate a portion of money to church

Name 2022 Christmas Crossword

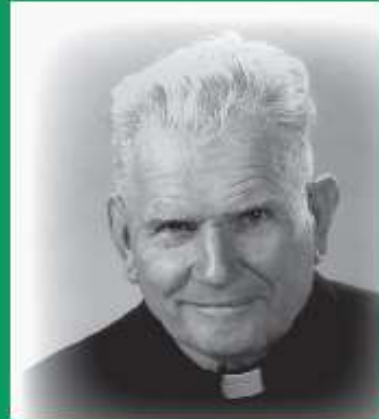
Date _____

Class _____

2022 Christmas Crossword



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 reference from a teacher or community member (pastor, coach, etc) and a 1200 word essay on the theme outlined below:

Abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace, freedom, love and the moral order as given by God (therefore of civilization). Clear examples of the bad fruit of abortion are the collapse of the traditional family as an institution, and a general increase in societal violence, such as domestic and child abuse, suicide and the use of arms. Discuss.

**SUBMIT DOCUMENTS VIA EMAIL BY
DECEMBER 1, 2022**

Email: dirocco@theinterim.com

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

