Religious Education

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD



Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ but it is celebrated differently in different parts of the world.

Christmas in Bethlehem

The little town where Jesus is said to have been born is the site of the Church of the Nativity, which is ablaze with flags and decorations every Christmas. This is the oldest church in the Holy Land and is said to have been built above the place where Jesus was born. On Christmas Eve natives and visitors alike crowd the church's doorways and stand on the roof to watch for the dramatic annual procession of galloping horsemen and mounted police carrying a cross. Christian homes in Bethlehem are marked by a Cross painted over the door and each home displays a homemade manger scene. Many onlookers go into the fields where the shepherds first heard the good news of Jesus' birth.

Christmas in Brazil

In Brazil, Christmas is one of the most important festive days, or "dia de fiestas". It is celebrated on 25th December which is summer in Brazil. Santa is known to the children as Father Noel. They are told that he wears red silk clothing because of the heat. Children hang a sock by the window in anticipation of a gift from Father Noel. Caroling is quite a popular custom in Brazil. Various Christmas carols are sung during Christmas to commemorate the birth of Christ.

Christmas in Australia

With all the glitter, tinsel and razzmatazz, Australians consider Christmas a time for remembering the true meaning of Christmas which is the birth of Jesus. Many children are at this time wrapping up their end of year exams in preparation for their summer holidays.
Even though it is time for sun, surf and shop, many families begin Christmas attending a mid-night mass.

As noted, Christmas celebrations can vary from place to place because of cultural differences. However, there are many common aspects to the celebrations. Caroling, feasting, and gift giving along with prayers and best wishes are a part of Christmas celebrations everywhere.

The message of Christmas is wrapped up in Jesus Christ. The Bible states that because God loved the world He gave His only Son, Jesus to redeem mankind back to Him. (John 3:16) When the angels delivered the message of Jesus' birth to the shepherds they brought "good tidings of great joy." (Luke 2:10) Many Christmas carols share a message of peace, love and joy.

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