



# CHRISTMAS



EXPLORING CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS ACROSS DIFFERENT TIMES,  
SOCIETIES AND CULTURES





## PAST

*Written by Connor Year 11*

Christmas is celebrated widely across the world by billions of people each year. With each new generation comes new traditions and ways to celebrate festive season. In England, the first recorded Christmas was in 1038. Medieval Christmas combined the gift giving of the Romans with some customs left over from the pagan Saxon Midwinter feast of Yule. Interestingly, it is suggested that it's from this event that the Beloved Farther Christmas originated, taking shape his from the Norse God Odin.

Although Christmas has been celebrated so far in the past, the Christmas we know began in Victorian England. It was at this time that the beloved Christmas trees became popularised through Queen Victoria's husband Prince Albert.

Commercial things such as Christmas cards, the turkey, decorations and carols also became tradition in this time. Presented brilliantly in Charles Dickens' novel *A Christmas Carol*, even in an era of death, poverty and disease, Christmas stood as a day which united all under one banner to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Thankfully the Victorian image of Christmas has widely stuck and is mostly celebrated the same each year by Christians around the world.



## PRESENT

*Written by Jules and Natalie*

*Year 7*

Historically, people began selling decorations and Christmas trees, because Christians were bringing decorated trees into their homes to represent the light Jesus Christ brings into the world. Gifts were and still are often gifted because of the three presents Jesus received on the day of his birth. All of the gifts and decorations that were made and later bought helped raise money for companies, so this new act of giving and receiving became part of the holiday. This in a sense shows how commercialising Christmas helps spread the meaning of Christianity. But do we always keep Christianity at the fore front of Christmas?

Nowadays, Christmas isn't fully celebrated as a Christian holiday and plenty of children believe it is only about gifts and decorations. We see shops flooded with people hurrying to buy presents for their own families and they don't seem to care about anyone else at this time. The amount of people going to Mass on Christmas Eve, day or Boxing day has decreased in numbers a lot during the past years. We must all remember that Christmas isn't just about the gifts, but instead about the wonderful saviour, Jesus Christ.



## FUTURE

*Written by Megan and Kelsey Year 9*

Christmas is seen as a time of giving gifts. Hopefully, in the future, we can see it as a time of love and compassion for all!

One of the main reasons we celebrate Christmas is for love and compassion, but, there are still people being left out. We hope that in the future, we include everybody, giving us time to smile and laugh together as a community and as individuals. Sharing the Christmas spirit has always been an important factor of the whole concept of Christmas. We use this time to enjoy giving gifts, smiling and generally being happy around the globe, together.

Recently, we were pleased to see a black family portraying the importance of family on the John Lewis Christmas Advert. The advert portrays the beauty in all families and it is an important representation of the black community. The messages within the advert also show us how to love each other's differences, at Christmas and always.

Everyone needs love at Christmas, no matter race, gender, sexuality, social class or background. We are all human and all made in the image of God. But who knows, we might be sharing our Christmas dinner with aliens one day...



## A Nigerian Christmas- *by Charlotte and Victoria Year 11*

After interviewing Victoria, I learned that a Nigerian Christmas is very different to any other Christmas. To get in to the Christmas spirit, streets are decorated with beautiful lights. On Christmas Eve many families throw parties and celebrate in the streets. In big cities such as Lagos there are parades all day long. As well as this, families pick up outfits they have had especially made for the big day. When Christmas morning finally arrives, families go to church or pray at home to give thanks to God for Jesus and the day. Instead of turkey, many Nigerian families eat foods such as beef, jollof rice, pounded yam and fried rice. If you want to wish your Nigerian friends a Merry Christmas, this is how you say it:

This half term's podcast has been shared via Microsoft email with all staff and pupils. Listen to us discuss Christmas traditions across different times, societies and cultures as well as sharing our own reflections of our Christmas celebrations!

## Mrs Battaglia said...

*Written by Oyinkansola Year 8*

Mrs Battaglia said that she adores speaking Christmas with her family because most people "go to church on Christmas Eve, so they can open presents on Christmas morning. She said spending time with family is just as important as mass. When we asked her what she liked doing at Christmastime with her family, she told us she is going to Lapland! Mrs Battaglia also told us she loves the catholic Christmas of singing the hymns in Church and she also likes going to mass and seeing the beautiful candles. We continued on to discuss Babushka and the Christian moral lesson of not allowing ourselves to get distracted from the real meaning of Christmas; she explained that sometimes Christmas can be over commercialised and that although this can help spread the catholic message, it is sometimes taken too far. She reminded us that Christmas isn't just about presents, but about being with family and friends... and we couldn't agree more!

**A question to our readers... *What is your favourite thing about Christmas?***

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