



The Celebration of Hanukkah



by Dylan Bates
Grade 4

Did you know that Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday? It is also called the Festival of Lights. Hanukkah celebrates the miracle when there was only enough oil to light a candle in a temple for one day, but the oil lasted eight days. That is why there are eight smaller candles on a menorah. There are nine candles, and the ninth is the biggest, and you light that one, and then with that flame, you light the other eight candles. You light one each night of Hanukkah, say a prayer, and get a present. Hanukkah also celebrates the Maccabees' victory over a king forbidding Jews to practice their religion. Once during Hanukkah, there was a war in Israel, so the people that celebrated Hanukkah prayed extra, and some kids even gave up some gifts!

Jewish children get one present each night. The last night is usually the most significant present. Some foods you eat during Hanukkah are

brisket, latkes with applesauce or sour cream (they are potato pancakes), and jelly donuts called sufganiyot. The dates of Hanukkah changes each year, but it is usually sometime in December.

This year it is from December 18 through December 26. People also sing songs.

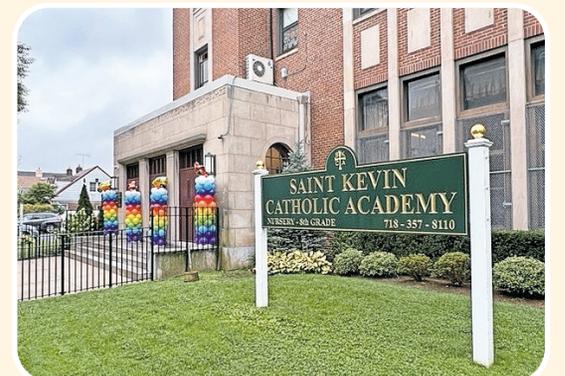
My dad's family is Jewish, so we celebrate Hanukkah with my cousins, aunt, uncle, grandma, pop,

and sometimes some of their friends. We go to my cousin's house to celebrate one of the nights of Hanukkah. We bring them presents, and I sometimes get some too! Last year, I got NY Yankees playing cards. We ate together and played the dreidel game. You spin a dreidel, which is like a top. It lands

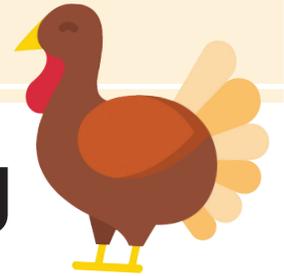


on different things that have you take or give chocolate coins in the center. I won chocolate gelt, which is chocolate wrapped in gold foil. I love the chocolate gelt. I also help my cousin light the menorah when it is time.

As Catholics, we are called to understand and respect all traditions and cultures. Hanukkah is a fun and meaningful holiday. And even though I'm Catholic, it is fun celebrating Hanukkah with my family.



This edition of *The Tablet Jr.* was created with the contributions of student journalists from St. Kevin Catholic Academy, Flushing, Queens, New York



The Celebration of Thanksgiving



by **Charlie Rubino**

Grade 5

Is Thanksgiving celebrated all around the world? No, it is North American and one of my favorite holidays. How did Thanksgiving start? Thanksgiving started a long time ago. Colonists in New England and Canada regularly served “thanksgiving,” days of prayer for such blessings as safe journeys, military victories, or abundant harvests. Americans model their holiday on a 1621 harvest feast shared between English colonists and the Wampanoag. Canadians trace their earliest Thanksgiving to 1578, when a Martin Frobisher - led

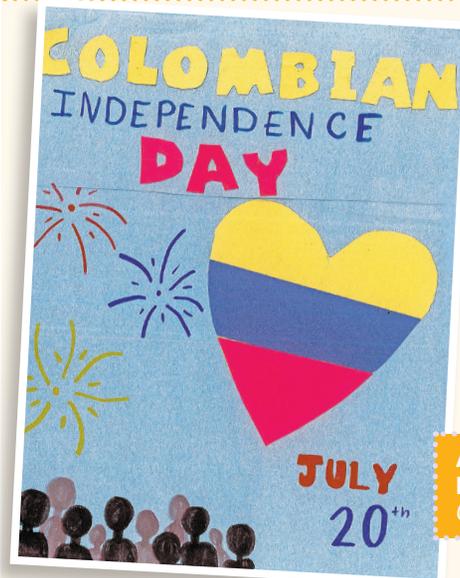
expedition celebrated in the safe passage.

Thanksgiving is celebrated in both Canada and America. Families and friends gather for a feast on thanksgiving. A traditional Thanksgiving in America often includes turkey, cranberry, and pumpkin pie. Parades and football games also have long associations with the holiday. Thanksgiving began with a few colonists going out “fowling,” possibly turkey prey of geese and duck. The Wampanoag contributed venison to the feast, which included fowl and probably fish, eels, shellfish, stews, vegetables, and beer. Since pilgrims had few buildings and manufactured goods, most people ate outside while sitting on the

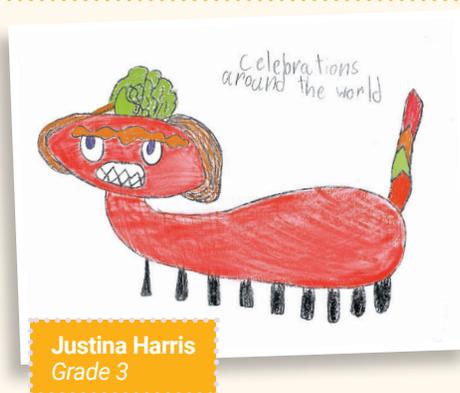
ground or on barrels with plates on their laps.

Canadian Thanksgiving is similar to America’s feast, but some differences exist. Often a turkey is replaced by a roast. Dessert is mainly cakes, not pies. Also, Canadian bacon is used in most side dishes. Do Canadians watch football on Thanksgiving? The Canadian Football League usually holds a nationally-televised doubleheader called “The Thanksgiving Day Classic.”

Thanksgiving is a time for us to recognize those things that mean the most to us and thank God for them. Even though the holiday season can be highly hectic, always be thankful and appreciate the good.



Angelina Rojas
Grade 7



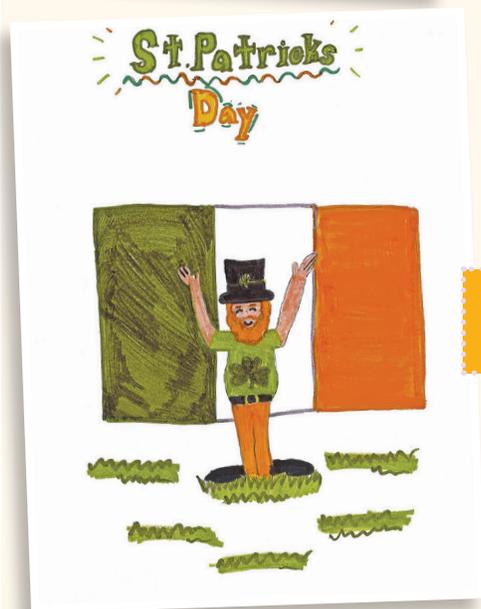
Justina Harris
Grade 3



Sofia Kuang
Grade 1



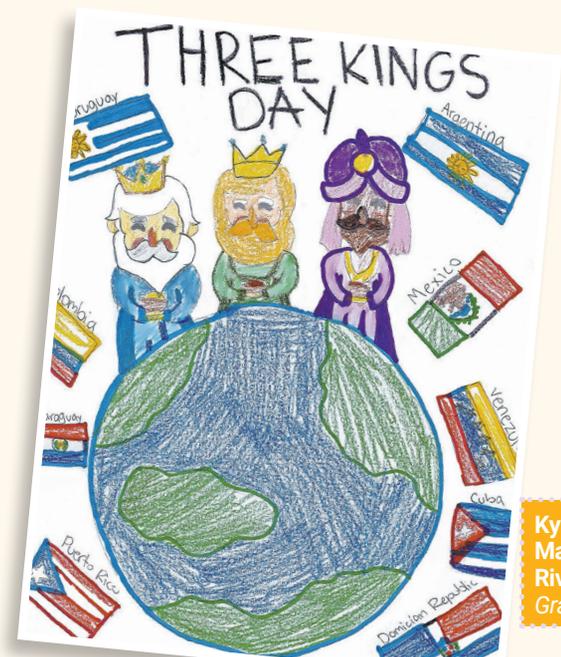
Ryan Samaroo
Grade 7



Gabriela McNally
Grade 7



Melissa Lee
Grade 4



Kyla Mangual Rivera
Grade 7

ASK Sister Elizabeth



I would like to know how people celebrate Christmas in China because the next language I want to learn is Chinese.

Matthew Lopez - 3rd grade

Interesting question, Matthew! I can tell from your question that you can learn new languages quickly - it is always a plus when you understand many languages. In many parts of the world, Christmas is a Christian holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus. But in China, the Christmas traditions are relatively young and have no religious attachment - it is not an official holiday. However, Chinese Christians celebrate Christmas with the culture of family dinners, Christmas decorations, and Santa Claus. On Christmas Eve, one common gift in Chinese culture is the "Peace Apple" wrapped in beautiful colors. Just like Christmas reminds us, Jesus came as the Prince of Peace - the Chinese "Apple" gifts signify peace and wish peace to anyone who eats the apple.

Why do we decorate Christmas trees at Christmas time?

Sofia Santos - Kindergarten

Great question, Sofia! Remember how you usually decorate your room/house during your birthday or any special celebration. Christmas tree decoration is a cultural way of preparing for Jesus's birth. The Christmas tree decoration reminds us of the prophet Isaiah 11:1 - "A shoot will come from the stump of Jesse, and a new shoot will grow from his root - the Christmas tree represent the branch of Jesse from which Jesus was born. The evergreen tree represents hope, and the decoration reminds us that Christ is the light of the world, and we, as Christians, are called to be witnesses to that light and, by our daily actions, bring others to Christ.

How do they celebrate birthdays in other countries?

Logan Vaquiz- Kindergarten

Thank you, Logan, for this beautiful question! Birthdays are special moments of joy and love, mainly when celebrated with families, friends, and loved ones. Across different cultures, birthday celebrations are diverse and have something unique that makes them exceptional. Popular traditions include decoration with balloons, blowing off the candles, cutting the cake, the birthday song, the food, and drinks. Nigerians believe in hosting a large crowd during birthdays with roasted cow or goat meat spices, onions, tomato, and a dish called "Jollof rice" The Chinese people eat long noodles on their birthday to symbolize longevity. In other cultures, such as Italy, the birthday celebrant is expected to open their birthday gift before the person who gave it. Irrespective of the different birthday traditions, it is always important to say some prayers for your family, friends, classmates, neighbors, and loved ones on their birthdays.



The Epiphany in Italy



by **Natalie D'Onofrio**
Grade 4

On January 6th, Italy's Feast of the Epiphany is a national public holiday. The Epiphany marks the end of the Christmas celebration. In Italy, The Epiphany is also known as La Befana. This is a big part of Italian Christmas Celebrations. The Epiphany celebrates the twelfth day of Christmas when the Three Wise Men arrived at the manger with gifts for baby Jesus.

La Befana is an Italian folklore about an old woman witch who rides her broomstick and brings presents to Italian children the night before the Epiphany on January 5th. The legend is that La Befana rides around the world on her broomstick and comes down chimneys to deliver candy and presents to children who have been good during the



year. For children that have not been good, La Befana leaves lumps of coal. The story of La Befana begins with The Magi, who were on their way to meet baby Jesus. The Wisemen stopped, asked La Befana for directions, and asked her to join them. At first, La Befana said no but then changed her mind. She could not find her way to the manger, so she gave the gifts for baby Jesus to other children. La Befana travels on her broomstick every year on January 5th looking for the manger and gives her presents to any Italian child that leaves out a shoe or hangs up a stocking on Epiphany Eve. After leaving her gifts, the old witch is known for sweeping the house before going on her broomstick. Special treats are cooked and baked for La Befana. La Befana is celebrated with traditional Italian foods like panettone. Also, a cake called befanini and Befana



cake is baked with a dried bean inside. Whoever gets in the bean in their slice of cake is king or queen for a day.

Another celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany is Mass. Italians go to church and spend the day with their families. Some towns in Italy also celebrate by holding parades and processions, with many dressed in costumes like La Befana, the Three Wise Men, Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. All schools and businesses are closed in celebration of the Epiphany. The Epiphany is celebrated in many different ways throughout the world. Together we all celebrate the gift of Jesus.

TEACHER GUIDES

Instructional Resource Guides are available for each issue of the Tablet Jr. You can find the supplemental lessons on CTNBQ.ORG/TABLETJR

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FIND THE WORDS

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| CELEBRATE | FAITH | PEOPLE |
| CONNECTION | FESTIVE | RELIGION |
| CULTURE | GLOBAL | RESPECT |
| DIVERSITY | INCLUSION | |



Diocesan History Corner

by Joseph Coen

Celebrations around the world

One celebration that may be familiar to some New Yorkers is the Feast of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre. This feast is beloved by Cubans. It dates back to 1612, when three boys, the Native American brothers Rodrigo and Juan de Hoyos and an African child slave, Juan Moreno were in a boat on the Bay of Nipe looking for salt. A storm blew in and their boat was in danger amid the waves. The youngest Juan was wearing a medal of the Blessed Virgin and so they prayed for her help. The sky suddenly cleared, and the waves abated. In the distance they saw something floating in the water. They discovered a statue of the Virgin Mary holding baby Jesus and a gold cross. The statue was attached to a board with the inscription saying, "I am the Virgin of Charity". Amazingly, the statue floating in the water was dry.

village of Barajuaga and showed it to a local government official who ordered that a small chapel be built for it. When the statue kept disappearing, they assumed that it wanted to be located somewhere else. First, they moved it to nearby El Cobre, but when it continued disappearing, they eventually moved the chapel to a small hill and built a church for it. The statue came to be associated with miraculous healing.

Over time, Popes have given great honors to the statue. Pope Francis brought a replica of the statue to the USA., which visited parishes in Queens in 2016. Retired Auxiliary Bishop Cisneros presented a statue of her to Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Corona, in 2020

Her feast day is September 8. In Cuba there is a pilgrimage to her shrine associated with the feast. In the Archdiocese of Miami where there is a large Cuban community, thousands gather each year to celebrate her feast day. Here in the Brooklyn Diocese her feast is also marked by a celebration.

Joseph Coen, C.A., is the archivist of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

The boys brought the statue to their

Fun Activities for You from Sadlier www.sadlier.com



.... Working Towards a Common Good
 Take a poll among your classmates, asking about their ancestry. Find out where your classmate, their parents or grandparents were born.
 Talk with your friends about their favorite holiday meal and traditions. You'll be surprised at the differences!
 Like your neighborhood, there are cultural differences around the whole world. School is different as well as the different religions practiced elsewhere. Even the way people shop for food and

clothing differs from our own neighborhood.
 Amid the differences, there is one common goal – COMMON GOOD – which is achieved when all people have an equal chance to fulfill their gifts and their unique calling by God. This calling is God's love for each of us. Saint Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions (The Martyrs of Vietnam) are a great example of this. They taught us that even though we are from different parts of the world,

we are brothers and sisters in faith working for the common good of others.

How do you respond to God's love? How will the teachings of Jesus help you respond with common good to those who are different than you? Common Good calls us towards the love of others that is at the heart of the Gospel.

With your family: Celebrate the love of Jesus who shares his mother with everyone around the world. Go to the link below and use handouts 3A-3F as table cards at your dinner table. Talk about how Mary helps everyone work towards a common good.

[HTTPS://GO.SADLIER.COM/RELIGION/HONORING-MARY-AROUND-THE-WORLD-WHOLE-COMMUNITY-EVENT](https://go.sadlier.com/religion/honoring-mary-around-the-world-whole-community-event)

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