

Monday,  
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# Purple and Gold

Issue #3

## The Origins of Christmas

By: Ayshel Vasconez '25

Where did Christmas come from? We celebrate this holiday every year with the traditional Santa, mistletoe, elf, and snowman decorations, but why? All of these traditions come from Roman and Pagan cultures. One of the many holidays the Romans celebrated was on December 25<sup>th</sup>, where they celebrated the birth of their sun god Mithra. As time progressed, European customs were being incorporated into Pagan customs. However, they began celebrating this holiday as the birth of Jesus instead of the sun god Mithra. Now that we know how Christmas started, the question about the decorations we use still stands. Our main decoration, the Christmas

cultures too! During their December celebrations, they believed decorating their homes with greenery and trees showed that the Spring would arrive. Although, the man, the myth, the legend Santa Claus did not come from Pagan culture. St. Nick came from Turkey! He was a man who was persecuted



for his beliefs and wanted to give back to the poor. Since he was being persecuted, his daughters were all alone and were going to be sold into slavery. There are many different stories passed around about how he exactly saved his daughters. Supposedly, he tossed them gold from the

chimney that landed in their socks. He was like Robin Hood but for his own family! Sooner or later, the story of St. Nicholas spread through nations and was interpreted by many different countries with countless cultures. Now, every country has their own legend of Chris Kringle, St. Nicholas, or Papa Noel.

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Nicholas spread through nations and was interpreted by many different countries with countless cultures. Now, every country has their own legend of Chris Kringle, St. Nicholas, or Papa Noel. Now, each country has their own Christmas Traditions.

## Christmas Traditions

By: Zoe Galko '25

Christmas is a favorite holiday for families all over the world. Since the first Christmas in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, families everywhere have developed traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Here are some of my family's favorite Christmas traditions:

1. Baking cookies with my grandma. Every year, about two weeks before Christmas, my sisters, my mom, and I go to my grandparents' house to bake cookies with my grandma. We bake cutout cookies, peanut butter cookies, and chocolate chip cookies, and we always save some to put out on Christmas Eve. When we bake, we wear aprons that were sewn by my great-great-grandmother and worn by my mom when she was a kid, and use recipes special to my family.

2. Advent Calendars  
One of my favorite things about Christmas is doing the Advent calendars with my family. Through the years, my parents bought enough calendars for each of my siblings and me to do one each night. We also have an Advent wreath that we light every Sunday leading up to Christmas, and doing it with my family is one of my favorite holiday traditions.

3. Driving around to see the lights  
A little before Christmas, my entire family crams into the car and we drive around the

area to see the Christmas lights. We go to Nay Aug Park and drive through the Christmas light display every year while listening to holiday music.

4. Secret Santa with my family  
There are seven people in my family, so trying to shop for Christmas gifts for each member can be hard. A few years ago, my family decided to start doing Secret Santa to make gift-giving easier. Each year, a week or two before Christmas, my family sits down together and we each draw a name from a hat. After we get home from Christmas Eve mass, we pass out the gifts and open them together.

5. Christmas Eve mass and going to my grandma's house  
My last and favorite Christmas tradition is going to mass on Christmas Eve with my family. After a relaxing day filled with Christmas excitement, my family and I go to evening mass and then over to my paternal grandmother's house. All of my little cousins and family members meet there and have a pasta and seafood dinner. Afterward, we open presents together and my family drives home excited for the next day.

Christmas is my favorite holiday and having traditions every year makes it much more special. I hope this article will make you appreciate your favorite holiday traditions. If your family doesn't have any, it's never too late to start one!

### Swimming Through the Season

By: Rosie Culkin '25

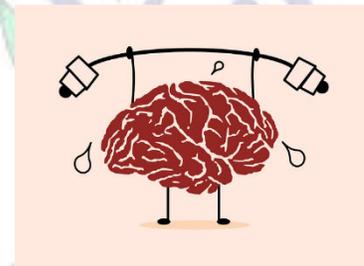
Usually, Prep students' wake up times range from 5:30 – 7:00 in time for their buses or rides. Unless of course, you're a swimmer. In which case wake up call is at 4:00 – 5:00 A.M with practice starting at 5:30 A.M and ending at 7:00 A.M. At practice, swimmers are tasked with demanding exercises that challenge their abilities. Practice starts with a warm-up, then sets of exercises the

swimmers perform, ending with a focus on a particular activity like dives or turns.

While the schedule is hard work, it definitely pays off. The Prep swim team dominated their first meet against Elk Lake Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> with the girl's team scoring 124 to 54 and the boy's team scoring 91 to 51. Congratulations to Nejib Abdu and Sophie Galko who were chosen as swimmers of the meet!

Under the guidance of Prep alumni coach Colin Manley, let's hope this great start to the season

continues on! Be sure to cheer on the team at their next meet at The University of Scranton against Abington Heights on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm! And follow the team's Instagram, @prepswimming for updates and the full meet schedule for 2023! Roll Cavs!



### Christmas Reflection

By: Brady O'Boyle '25

The holiday season is very anticipated by many. The end of a year brings joy to so many regardless of what you celebrate. As children we try with every bone in our body to be well behaved so we can get something we've desperately wanted from Santa clause. Of course, we grow up, the magic fades, and while the holiday season may become a little less magical, we find a new meaning. To me, looking back, the holidays have and always meant love. We work hard to get gifts for those we care for, our family, friends, and

significant others. We gain a new appreciation for core aspects of life. I always remember every Christmas day going to the big family gathering at my great aunt's house and talking to people who I haven't seen in ages like we just were together yesterday, that's something I have always admired, holidays make many people cheerful. Being raised by my grandparents I also look back and realize just how appreciative I am to have two great people in my life, who every year tried to make my Christmas so special, since my childhood was different from most. That is what the holidays have always really been about compassion, and I implore you to go out and make this holiday season special to someone in your life in a rough spot.

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