



Heritage Happenings

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Lest We Forget...

Traditions...they come out of the wood work at Christmas time. Memories of decorating, baking, shopping, special ornaments, hanging tinsel—the REAL kind!! fill these days before the coming of Jesus. This issue of Heritage Happenings brings you some of the known and unknown legends of the Christmas season and their association with Mary and her son, Jesus.spiders, robins, candy canes, poinsettias, glow-worms!! Rosemary, tinsel, Holly, pickles., many more.



The Story of the Christmas Robin

The Christmas night was extremely cold and a cold breeze blew constantly into the stable where Mother Mary lay with her infant, Jesus. The fire in the stable, was about to go out. All that Mary could do was call the surrounding animals for help: the sleeping ox, lazy donkey, horse and the sheep, but they were either of no use or just refused to help. Suddenly, Mary heard the flapping sound of wings. A robin had heard Mother Mary's cry for help and had flown to the stable to help her out. The robin flapped his wings hard at the dying embers of fire until the fire was rekindled and became bright red. He fanned so hard that the fire never went out and kept the baby warm. To ensure that the fire stayed alive, the robin used his beak and dropped some dry sticks in the fire. This caused the fire to rise abruptly and it burnt the breast of the bird. Despite the burns that he received, the bird continued fanning so that the infant could be kept warm for long enough to sleep comfortably. Mother Mary heartily thanked the robin for his efforts and tenderly looked at his breast that was now red with the burns and blessed him for his deed of valor and selflessness.

The Legend of the Christmas Rose

When Jesus was born, angels told everybody about it. A little girl called Madelon heard the good news. She saw three wise men on their way to visit the baby. She followed them. However, when she arrived at the stable, she realized she had nothing to give. She looked around for flowers, but no flowers were growing through the snow. Tears rolled from her eyes into the snow. An angel saw her crying and turned her tears into beautiful flowers. Madelon took the roses inside, and since then, they have been blessed to survive the cold. The Christmas Rose shows itself amidst the snow in the coldest time of the year.

Legend of the Stork

Mother Mary lay in a stable in Bethlehem, with baby Jesus, surrounded by an assortment of birds and beasts that had come over to greet the Lord of the world. The wild animals stood far and just hoped for nothing more than a glimpse of the new born King while the rest of the animals knelt down humbly beside the infant. Among those kneeling, stood a long legged stork with white feathers. The stork sighed when he saw the poor bed on which lay the Lord, lying in the straw, with no pillow, to rest His head. He could not offer any crown or jewels befitting the baby King, His true compassion for Jesus made him give the ultimate gift to Him. He plucked feathers from his plumage and gave them to the child to be used as a pillow. This was the best pillow that the baby could ask for. Infant Jesus smiled with overwhelming gratitude and blessed the stork with undying glory and even today, storks are a symbol of births.





The Legend of the Christmas Wreath

The circular shape of the Christmas wreath symbolizes eternal life and the everlasting love of God, who sent his only Son to redeem humankind. The prickly holly reminds us of Christ's crown of thorns, the red berries, His sacrifice for our salvation; and the white blossoms bring to mind His innocence.

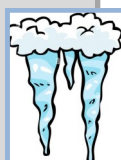
CHRISTMAS SPIDER LEGEND



Long ago in Germany, a mother was cleaning for Christmas. Spiders fled up to the attic to escape the broom. On quiet Christmas Eve, the spiders slowly came down for a peek. "Oh, what a beautiful tree!" In excitement they scurried up and out along each branch. They were filled with happiness as they climbed amongst the glittering beauty. But, alas! By the time they were done, the tree was shrouded in their dusty web. When the Christ child came to bless the house, He was surprised to find little spiders and their webs on the tree. He knew that every creature was made by God and yet he knew how the mother who had worked hard all day to make everything perfect would be dismayed to find the spider webs on its tree. Thus, with a heart full of love and a smile on his lips, the Christ child touched the spider webs and set them sparkling and shining in silver and golden colors that made the Christmas tree look even more beautiful than before. Today we have tinsel...and you might find the Christmas spider in its branches.

Legend of the Icicles

One beautiful night long ago,
The Savior was born in a winter snow. The angels in heaven looked down on His birth, As their tears of happiness fell to the earth. God wanted a reminder of the love He brings And the joyful tears at the birth of our King. So He caught their tears in His powerful hands, And spread them as crystals across the land.
So as a special reminder for all to see, we see icicles form for you and for me.



Long ago,
a gleaming star
Led the way
To a child born
In a manger.
Today it is believed
That snowflakes are
Little pieces of that
Special star
That leads us to
The Light of the
World Jesus.



The Legend of the Snowflake

= The M&M Nativity Legend =

Hold M&M's in your hand, and turn them, look and see...
The "M" becomes a "W", an "E" and then a "3".
The tell the Christmas Story, it's one I'm sure you know.
It took place in a stable, a long, long time ago.
The "E" is for the East, where the star shone O so bright.
The "M" is for the Manger where Baby Jesus slept that night.
The "3" is for the wise men bearing gifts, how quickly they came.
"W" is for worship, an angelic choir sang praises to his name.
So as you eat these candies or share them with a friend,
Remember the true Spirit of Christmas and never let it end!



Legend of the Christmas Balls

When the baby Jesus was born, three wise men came to offer the Christ child gifts. A poor little boy in Bethlehem also wanted to offer a gift for the newborn King but he had no gift to give. So he gathered some of his tiny toy balls he always played with and he began to juggle for the baby. His juggling act made the baby Jesus laugh. Thus we hang balls on the Christmas tree -- it reminds us to be joyful as we remember the laughter of God and how Jesus was given to us so that we may have peace, love and joy in our life.

The Christmas Pickle

One legend says St. Nicholas saved three boys on their way home from boarding school for the holidays. On the way, they stayed at an inn, where the evil innkeeper killed them and placed them in a pickle barrel. St. Nicholas found the boys in the barrel when he stopped at the same inn, and he brought them back to life. A hidden pickle is the last ornament to be hung on the tree. Can you find it?