



Crossing Christ Out of Christmas

Have you ever been annoyed by seeing "Xmas" instead of "Christmas". Taken from Christ Mass, this abbreviation has crept into use - right along with Christmas displays appearing as early as October! Some say those who use this abbreviation are crossing Christ out of Christmas, but scholars also say this is the Greek letter "chi" - abbreviation for "Christos".

There are, however, ways that we do cross Christ out of Christmas:

1. We cross Christ out, when we bury Christmas' blessed meaning under the tinsel and trappings of a mere festival.
2. We cross Christ out when we permit our fears and our hates to put us in the camp of darkness that has always tried to snuff out the light of love and good will kindling the hope of the world.
3. We cross Christ out when we permit the Rudolphs, chestnuts roasting and Jingle Bells to suppress the immortal music of Christmas.

A moment of insight

The first Christmas night the shepherds, burdened by problems and fears and misgivings about life itself, were suddenly aware that they could trust the love of God. God had not left them alone to make the best of a bad situation. He was the living comrade of life who cared enough to seek them out of the darkness of the night, even though they were unimportant people in an insignificant province of the Roman Empire. In one flashing moment they knew God had "crossed out" their past lives and invaded them with love that could be trusted.

Let's "cross out" then, our own wills and self-centered attitudes - let's stop crossing Christ out. Christ gave us love in this gift of the Christ-Child. Love - in any form must never be crossed out. Christmas means love!

Richard Thomas,
BSG Superior

COMMUNITY NOTES

New York, NY: On September 30th, Br. John Peter, who is studying at the Institute of Theology, received his Lay Reader's License, and preached his first sermon on October 31st in the St. James Chapel of the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. . . . Over the weekend of October 10th Br. Roger, founder of the Community of Taize, an ecumenical Order working for the reconciliation of the Church, led a pilgrimage of prayer and hope at St. Patrick's Cathedral (Roman), Holy Trinity (Greek Orthodox), concluding at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. Several of the New York Brothers were able to attend this pilgrimage, and join in prayer and worship.

Bronx, NY: Br. William was presented the Saint Andrew's Distinguished Citizen Award, in recognition of his "significant contribution to the quality of life of all . . . who live in the Bronx. "

Brewer, ME: St. Patrick's Church enjoyed a truly meaningful Autumn Feast with its first Evensong co-officiated by the Vicar, the Reverend Samuel G. Henderson III, and Br. Brendan, BSG. This was the first Evensong in the parish's six year existence. Br. Brendan, who is studying at Bangor Theological Seminary, also officiates at Thursday evening Vespers.

Mendham, NJ: Several of the Gregorian Friars were able to spend a lovely, though rainy, afternoon with the Sisters of St. John Baptist. The Brothers arrived for tea and enjoyed a quiet chat before joining the Sisters at Vespers and Benediction. After the service, all gathered for supper, at which Archbishop Koerner asked the Grace. It was a time for making new friendships and renewing old ones.



Sisters of CSJB with Brothers of BSG, together with Archbishop Koerner and Fr. Gross, CSSS.

**CHRISTMAS came - a day of disciplined insobriety - and the 1st Battalion entered 1916 in a state of health and happiness. But it was a hand to mouth happiness, preyed upon by that remote noise of artillery; and as for health, well, we were all of us provisionally condemned to death in our own thoughts, and if anyone had been taken seriously ill and sent back to "Blighty" he would have been looked upon as lucky. For anybody who allowed himself to think things over, the only way out of it was to try and feel secretly heroic, and to look back on the old life as pointless and trivial. I used to persuade myself that I had "found peace" in this new life. But it was a peace of mind which resulted from a physically healthy existence combined with a sense of irresponsibility. There could be no turning back now; one had to do as one was told. In an emotional mood I could glory in the idea of the supreme sacrifice. — Memoirs of an Infantry Officer,
by Siegfried Sassoon**

If everything were as it should be, what we sing in our Christmas songs would be true: "To God on high be glory, and peace to his people on earth!" But is there really peace and good will? I truly wonder if there are many people around the world this Christmas, who cannot in all their misery and hurt, sing "Joy to the world!"

I am sure there are people like that, and we who are happy should think of those who are sad. What counts here on earth, not only during the Christmas season but every morning and every evening and all day long, is not only being happy yourself, but helping those who are not happy.

Who are these people? One is ill, and cannot celebrate Christmas with his dear ones. Another has lost someone so dear that he is filled with sadness and loneliness, for he has no one with whom to celebrate Christmas. Others have no place where they can celebrate Christmas. In many places around the world people are not permitted to go to church or to observe Christmas even in their homes, because the tyrants ruling them do not want anyone to celebrate the birth of Christ. Thousands of families have fled from these countries to other lands where they will have freedom to live as they want, and celebrate Christmas as free Christians. Some of these refugees are living in poverty and misery, it certainly can not be very happy for them!

We could go on naming different kinds of people who do not find it easy to be happy, and who perhaps find it especially hard at Christmas to find joy in the world. But we must encourage and comfort, never giving in to despair. Poverty, misery and loss do not deny the truth of Christ. For nothing in this world can dampen his coming, and his kingdom.

If we are glad in the way his angels meant, we must always and above all remember that unhappiness and trouble need not torment the world. Christ's wisdom and love live *together* at last. and his promised kinadam is here !

-- Brendan, BSG

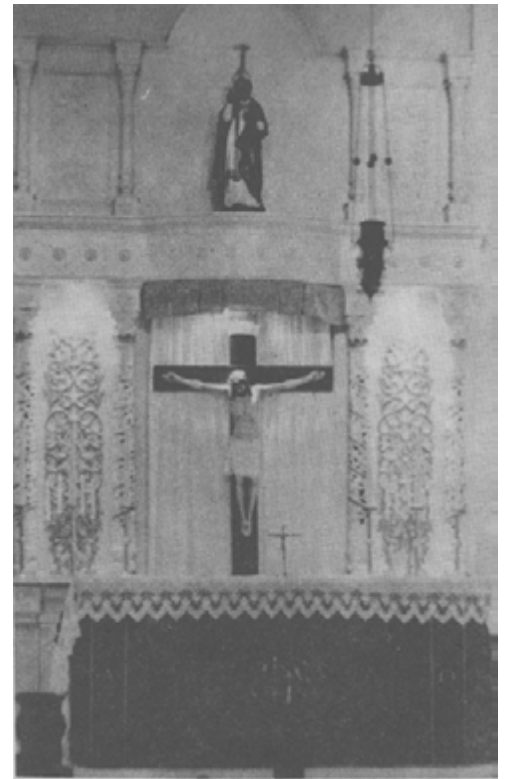
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ECUMENICAL MISSION IN BROOKLYN

The North American Old Roman Catholic Church traces its roots to the early 18th century split between Rome and the See of Utrecht over the latter's right to election of its own bishop, which right had been granted in the Middle Ages.

Old Roman Catholicism came to America early in this century in the person of Archbishop de Landas-Berghes, who had been consecrated by the Old Roman Catholic Archbishop of Great Britain. His sense of ecumenism was strong, witnessed by his co-consecration of the Anglican Bishop of Cuba at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. It was Archbishop de Landas-Berghes who established the Old Roman Catholic Church in North America.

The high altar at St. Augustine's
O. R. C. Cathedral



Archbishop George T. Koerner



Today the New York Archdiocese has three churches and three missions serving the greater metropolitan area. Our Br. William Francis serves at the Cathedral of St. Augustine in Brooklyn as assistant to the Most Rev'd George T. Koerner, Archbishop and Vicar General, and to the Rev' d Albert J. Berube, Administrator of the Cathedral. Brother is also in charge of the Altar Guild there. He has preached on several occasions as part of the regular schedule of preachers, and acts as Master of Ceremonies on greater feasts.

The Brotherhood has provided for the return of music to St. Augustine's by securing a speaker for their organ when the Cathedral's was destroyed by vandals late last year. The Order is looking forward to a long and fruitful association with the Cathedral and its clergy and staff, and is pleased to have the opportunity to serve the Body of Christ in this ecumenical work.

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The Incarnation

A child's hand is a weak and tender thing,
small, soft and scarcely able well to clasp
at anything that you might chance to bring
within the compass of its gentle grasp.
They say it's reflex, instinct and not will
that makes an infant hold to what you place
in its small hand, although it gives a thrill
of joy, of pride which reason can't erase.

And once there was a Child (whose tender hand
clung thus to straw, and frankincense and gold,
and bitter myrrh brought from a distant land)
who lived that future ages might be told:
God did not heal the hurt of Adam's curse
until a Child's hand held the universe.

Tobias Stanislas, BSG

+++ THE APPEAL FOR MISSION +++

COMPUTERS - COMPUTERS - COMPUTERS: The Mailing List for the SERVANT has just reached Thirteen Hundred :: We urgently need YOUR HELP. Enclosed with this issue you will find the "Appeal for Mission" envelope. This month the donation you give is very special. If each of you would place just \$2.50 in the envelope, we would be able to purchase a small computer for our mailing list and printing. We have been sticking labels by hand (it takes 8 of us) and then we must zip code them and bundle each code. A computer will enable us to this work easily and free us to do the other tasks the Lord wills. Won't you help? Just \$2.50 from each of you will do it.

May the Lord bless and keep you, now in this joyous season, and always.

INTERCESSIONS

For the sick, especially

Jean Murray

Matthew Rottkamp

Bud Gregg

For the departed, especially

The Rev' d C. Ronald Garmey

Br. Joseph Scott, OSB

Mark Durand

For the Clergy, especially

The Most Rev' d Robert A. K. Runcie

The Right Rev' d John M. Allin

The Right Rev'd Paul Moore, Jr.

and the Brothers of Province II, and the Clergy with whom they serve:

The Revd Thomas F. Pike

Chaplain Emeritus

The Rev'd Frank L. Knight, Jr.

Provincial Chaplain

The Rev' d J. Norman Hall

The Rev' d Errol A. Harvey

The Rev' d Ledlie I. Laughlin, Jr.

The Rev' d Richard L. May

The Rev' d Robert R. Parks

The Rev'd Robert Pollard III

Brothers Richard Thomas, James, Leslie Victor, Jason Jude, Anthony Francis, John Peter, William Francis, Stephen Joseph, Andrew, Tobias Stanislas, William and Edward Peter

For the Religious, especially

The Visitation Nuns

The Sacramentine Nuns

All Saints Sisters of the Poor

Society of Saint John the Evangelist

Special Intentions for

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk England

The Companions and Friends of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory

Jeanne Brimigion, upon the loss of her father

David Pelletier

Jerry Moize

Roy Tobin

Thanksgiving for

The Revd Lee Jastner's reception into the Episcopal Church as a deacon Br.

William's receiving the Saint Andrew's Distinguished Citizen Award The recovery

and continued health of Arthur Golden