



## More than a day to give in every way

**Our Catholic tradition celebrates Christmas as a season, not merely a day. Our celebrations of Christ's coming only commence on the evening of the 24 December and extend through the first weeks of January.**

For many, Christmas is spent travelling and exchanging gifts with family and friends. The first exchange began when the Magi followed a star that led them on a long journey to Jesus, they too brought gifts. God gave us the greatest gift when he sent Jesus Christ to the earth.

Jesus is there to give his life; they [the Magi] offer him their own costly gifts: gold, incense and myrrh. The Gospel becomes real when the journey of life ends in giving. To give freely, for the Lord's sake, without expecting anything in return: this is the sure sign that we have found Jesus. For he says: "The gift you have received, give freely as a gift" (Mt 10:8). (Pope Francis, Epiphany Homily, 2018)

At Christmas Pope Francis suggests "we give a gift pleasing to Jesus when we care for a sick person, spend time with a difficult person, help someone for the sake of helping, or forgive someone who has hurt us. These are gifts freely given, and they cannot be lacking in the lives of Christians."

"Jesus Christ is the "true gift" of Christmas. He brings new life based on love and not on selfishness. Following Christ," urged the pontiff, "we must also become a gift for others."

Finally, a challenge from Pope Francis to "think of some free gift that we can give without expecting anything in return. That will please the Lord. And let us ask him: "Lord, let me rediscover the joy of giving"."

We wish you a glorious and extended Christmas season filled with the joy of giving!

*Christ our Light,  
May we open our hearts and homes to spend our Christmas Season  
giving more free gifts than expensive ones  
and may our presence be a true gift for others.  
Let us remember always, that You are the "true gift"  
being born in each of us today and always.  
May we, like Mary, accept the call to bring Your light into our world.*

NB This holy time contains many special days to celebrate, including: Feast of the Holy Family (30 December), Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (1 January), Most Holy Name of Jesus (3 January), Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord (6 January) and the Baptism of the Lord (13 January).

References: <http://bit.ly/2QJ4KKh>; <http://bit.ly/2BiubLC>;  
<http://bit.ly/2QWg9ca>; <http://bit.ly/2CcebMW>.

### REFLECTION

> How can you use your free gifts to bring joy to others?

COMPASSION JUSTICE RESPECT HOPE