



THE INQUISITOR

IN THIS ISSUE

- Semester Assessments
- Study Tips
- The Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- Christmas Crack Recipe
- Christmas Decorating
- Cozy Night In
- Critiquing the Carols
- Christmas Traditions
- Editorial

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

By: Addie-Quinn Kammerdeiner

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception takes place on December 8 and was made an official holy day by Pope Pius IX in 1854. This day honors Mary's conception in her mother's womb without original sin. When establishing this dogma, Pope Pius IX said, "the most blessed Virgin Mary was preserved, by particular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in anticipation of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, immune from every stain of original sin from the very first instant of his conception and this must therefore be the object of certain and immutable faith for all the faithful."

In 1857, the monument dedicated to this holy day was built. This monument is called "The Column of the Immaculate Conception" and is located in Piazza Mignanelli, Italy. It is made up of a marble base and column that holds up a bronze statue of Mary. Every year on December 8, Italians gather to honor this statue of the Blessed Mother.

The feast day is the kickstart of the Christmas spirit in Italy. Christmas trees are decorated, Christmas decorations start to enter the households, holiday baking commences, and much more all take place on this day of honoring the Holy Mother who gave birth to Christ.

The night before the Immaculate Conception, Roman Catholic Italians go into the town plazas and light a large bonfire to honor Mary. After the fire dies down, the locals in the towns roast potatoes and sausages over the fire and enjoy this time together. Even the children stay up late, having the day off of school the next day so they can go to Mass and celebrate with their families.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is also the start of the Christmas festivities in Catalan and the rest of Spain. Like the Italians, the people of Spain gather their decorations and put up their Christmas trees. They also look at the lights put up around the towns, to celebrate this day with family and friends.



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10 SMART TEST-TAKING TIPS

By: Elizabeth Dwane

2021 is right around the corner—and so is the end of the first semester. And much to the dismay of the Seton student population, due to the temporary shutdown, midterms are cancelled and will be replaced by semester assessments. However, that does not mean that preparation will not be required. Here are ten tips for preparing for them!

1. **Make a schedule** – Write yourself a schedule on how to prepare for the upcoming assessments. It doesn't necessarily have to be a strict outline. A rough agenda to give you an idea of how you are going to approach your studying is more than enough!
2. **Minimize distractions and interruptions** – Find a good study space with minimal distractions or interruptions (whether it be your sibling or your phone), such as your desk or at the library.
3. **Pay attention in class** – Listen and take notes while reviewing in class and use them to study.
4. **Know the material** – Find different ways to help you familiarize with the material you are studying, such as reciting them out loud or coming up with memorable examples of the material. Visualizing and associating the material with things you are familiar with can help with memorization.

5. **Do not cram** – Cramming greatly increases stress levels and makes it harder to concentrate on studying. Plus, cramming usually leads to less sleep the night before you do the assessment.
6. **Take breaks** – Taking short breaks while studying improves focus and attention.
7. **Do not overstudy** – Studying too hard for too long can cause your brain to get tired and slow down. Studying efficiently doesn't necessarily mean studying for hours without breaks.
8. **Sleep!** – The more sleep you get, the clearer you can think and the better you can remember the information you studied the night before! Plus, no one wants to fall asleep in the middle of trying to work a math problem!
9. **Take care of yourself** – Get to bed at a reasonable time the night before and then eat a healthy breakfast the next day. Your brain can function and access information a lot easier if you are energized and alert.
10. **Reward yourself** – After finishing your exam/assessments, or after finishing a preparation study session, reward yourself, whether it be a fun activity with your friends or eating your favorite dessert!

Festive Fun with the Fam

By: Elizabeth Moore

It's only natural to get a little stir-crazy during winter break, especially with this year's elongated gap between physical school days. So, in order to keep boredom far away, here's a list of fun things to do if your break grows longer.

Go for a bike ride around your neighborhood

Going by yourself or with family members on an exercise excursion will get you some much needed Vitamin D, which helps with staving off illnesses and seasonal depression.

Have an at-home spa day

Why not treat yourself and your family members with face masks and relaxing music? Take a day during the break solely for rest and relaxation with your loved ones.

Phone a friend

Family is forever, but friends are nice too! Try inviting your friend over to play video games, work on schoolwork, or just to catch up. It's only natural to get tired when you are around the same people constantly, so mix it up a little!

Learn an instrument

Does your father own a guitar? Did your grandparents give your family a never-played-piano? Do you have half a bucket of nuts? Perfect! Ask your parents for a few music books or look it up on the internet and begin learning how to play!

Make a pillow fort

Do you have siblings? How about beds and couches? Great! You're halfway there! Just assemble your own safe-house and spend time with your siblings.

Read a new book series

Let yourself get lost in stories like Little Women, Pride and Prejudice, the Mistborn series, or anything by William Shakespeare! Get transported to new worlds and fall for creative characters.

Write a short story

Speaking of stories, why not write one? If you can't think of anything to write, just look up "clean story prompts" on Google and let your creativity fly!

Learn a new hobby

Look up videos on how to knit, begin learning photography, or figure out how to paint. Anything is possible and there is really nothing you're losing by learning!

Baking

Ask your mother for a cookbook and get started! Make your own gingerbread house or Yule log; just make sure to get some help for some extra family bonding!



Critiquing the Carols

By: Noelle Peters

At this point just about everyone has heard of "The Christmas Carol", but not exactly from the classic novel by Charles Dickens. Most have heard of "The Christmas Carol" from its various adaptations into movies. This will be an inside look into some of the movie adaptations and reviewing them from worst to best.

5) Bah, Humduck! This is the Looney Toons adaptation of the famous novel "The Christmas Carol". It takes place in a modern setting and casts Daffy Duck as Scrooge. Although this short movie isn't the most accurate variation of the book, it is certainly a funny movie to watch and helps you grasp the idea and moral of the original story.

4) The Christmas Carol with Jim Carrey I must admit, after my first time seeing this movie, I was far from impressed. I am usually never disappointed with a Jim Carrey movie, but this one did not capture his usual comic relief. This adaptation definitely stood out from the rest, despite its unusual animation. It brought a more Halloween feel than the cheerful atmosphere of Christmas. However, I found the movie took a different approach to the Ghost of Christmas Past which I enjoyed. The ghost was depicted as a candle of sorts and carried around a candle snuffer with him, much like the novel.

3) Mickey's Christmas Carol This movie brought so much fun to my evening because it was very cheerful and interesting to watch. Cartoon

Disney characters from various shows took on the roles in "The Christmas Carol". Scrooge Duck (Donald Duck's uncle) was brought along with Jiminy Cricket as the Ghost of Christmas Past, Willie the Giant as the Ghost of Christmas Present, and Pete as the Ghost of Christmas Future. Although it was more enjoyable than accurate to the novel, it is highly recommended.

2) A Christmas Carol with George C. Scott This movie was made in 1984 and portrays a very accurate version of "The Christmas Carol" novel. George C. Scott takes on the role as Scrooge and gives a very hardcore, Christmas-hating attitude throughout the movie. He is brought along on the traditional adventures of "The Christmas Carol" and amends his ways. The one criticism I had for this version was that it took out the magic that thrives in "The Christmas Carol", which greatly disappointed me. Besides that, it is a great adaptation of the novel.

1) A Muppets Christmas Carol Although I've watched this movie every year of my life, it is still such a great Christmas movie to enjoy with my family. Michael Caine is featured as Scrooge and is the only human that stars in the movie. As unexpected as it is, I would confidently say that this adaptation is very accurate to the novel, even though it is a musical, and definitely has its silly moments. I highly recommend watching this film!



Christmas Around the World

By: Jenna Novacosky

Santa Claus, Christmas lights, nativity scenes: these all may come to mind when you first think of Christmas. However, there are lots of interesting holiday traditions that are unique to each country and culture. From eating KFC for your holiday feast, to roller skating to church on Christmas, here are two unique holiday traditions from around the globe.

Have you ever considered eating fast food for your Christmas dinner? Well, believe it or not, about 3.6 million Japanese families feast on Kentucky Fried Chicken every year on the night of December 25th. Although many in Japan simply don't celebrate the holiday, and others spend it dining at fancy restaurants, many partake in the unique tradition of enjoying a special KFC Christmas dinner. In fact, this meal is so high in demand that many families order it weeks in advance, and those who don't often spend hours waiting in line. According to Eric Barton from BBC, the idea started with Takeshi Okawara, the manager of the first KFC in the country. Apparently, after hearing a few foreigners talk about how they missed Christmas turkey, Okawara started to promote his "Party Barrel" as a way to celebrate the holiday. Eventually, KFC made the marketing plan national, and many Japanese still enjoy the meal every year.

When most people think about how they'll get to Christmas Mass, they decide on taking a car, bus, or maybe a train. However, many Venezuelans decide on a more unique form of transportation, roller skates. This tradition is mainly seen in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. From December 16 to Christmas Eve, the government closes the streets to motor vehicles in the early mornings so that citizens can skate to the Misas de Aguinaldo (Early Morning Mass) of the day. According to legend, children would tie pieces of string to their toes that dangled out of their windows. Then, skaters passing outside would tug the strings to wake the children for the morning. Although the origin of this tradition is unknown, some claim that it is Venezuela's alternative to sledding. Whether you drive, walk, or roll to church this year, be sure to have a very Merry Christmas!



Addicted to Christmas Crack A Recipe

By: Addie-Quinn Kammerdeiner



Ingredients:

- 1 sleeve of Saltine Crackers
- 1 cup of unsalted butter
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1 (12 oz.) package of dark chocolate chips
- Any amount you prefer of Heath Toffee Bits
- Any amount you prefer of melted white chocolate

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 375° and line a rimmed cookie sheet with parchment paper. Grease parchment paper with cooking spray.
2. Place your crackers side by side on a baking sheet lined with greased parchment paper.
3. In a large saucepan, mix the butter and brown sugar together then boil for three minutes, stirring constantly. The texture should be like a liquid.
4. Pour the butter and sugar mixture over the crackers, spreading it out with a spoon, then bake for 5 minutes.
5. Remove from the oven and sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Let stand for 5 minutes, then use the back of a spoon to spread melted chocolate chips evenly over the crackers.
6. Top with toffee bits and drizzle with white chocolate.
7. Cool completely in the fridge for one to two hours, or in the freezer for about 20 minutes, then break into pieces.
8. Store in the fridge in a covered airtight container.

Deck the Halls

By: Charlotte Yelvington

Decorating your house for the Christmas season can prove to be a difficult task. With so many nooks and crannies to fill, it can be hard to find different, beautiful ways to decorate your home. Picking a theme can help give your house a sense of coherence and make it easier to think of ways to decorate without making anything clash! Below are a few different themes you can use to decorate your house for Christmas.

Classic Christmas: Going with this traditional theme can give your house a timeless, comforting look. Tinsel, red ribbon, and a golden star will give your tree some vintage ambiance, while handmade ornaments and family photos tie the look together with a cozy feeling as if your house is in a classic Christmas film!

Red and Green: A red and green theme is a simple and easy choice for your decorations. With so many different shades of each color, there are an abundance of decorations to choose from! Try incorporating classic decorations such as poinsettia flowers, wreaths with red ribbon, or solid colored ornaments.

Rustic: A rustic theme will give your home a relaxing, warm cabin feeling with its simple charm and neutral colors. To achieve a true rustic look, try using wooden elements and soft, warm colors. Wooden ornaments and soft yellow lights can transform your tree into a rustic dream!

North Pole: Use your imagination and transform your house into Santa's workshop with colorful and bright decorations! Incorporating some items that could be found at the North Pole will give your house a vivid, fun atmosphere. Candy canes, multicolored lights, and an elf on the shelf will make it look like Santa and his elves have been hard at work in your home!

White Christmas: If you're dreaming of a white Christmas, then try using this theme to decorate your house. White, snowy decorations can give a refreshing and clean feeling throughout your home. Try using white ornaments against your tree to achieve a modern and crisp look.

Be sure to set up your Christmas creche in a prominent place. Add the baby Jesus statue on Christmas Eve and rejoice in God's love for us.

Happy decorating!



A Cozy Night In

By: Abby Ramos

After a long day of work, a relaxing night is essential. You're probably tired from looking at a screen all day and you most likely have more work to do tomorrow during this endless cycle of school. So, give yourself a break, grab your favorite blanket, and have a cozy night in!

- 1. Go on a walk:** As you finish your homework, going out on a walk during the sunset and getting a breath of fresh air after staying inside all day is very refreshing and you can stretch out your legs. This helps clear your mind and you're getting bonus exercise!
- 2. Take a hot shower or bath:** After your walk, although you feel refreshed, you probably smell like sweat and taking a shower or bath will remove the smell and relax your muscles, starting off a relaxing night. You could even listen to your favorite music and have a dance party!
- 3. Set the mood:** You can't be relaxed when the mood isn't right. Declutter the room, light some candles, and set up fairy lights to give the room a cozy feel. If you're in the living room, put big, comfy blankets all around and put a bunch of pillows on the couch. Turn on the fireplace, and if you don't have one, there are videos on Youtube of fireplaces. Continue to play your favorite music!
- 4. Bake and eat sweets:** Baking anything will make your house smell like a warm bakery in the winter, but if you are not in the mood to bake anything, you could always just buy the sweets the day before and the cozy feeling will be just the same, well, almost.
- 5. Watch movies:** Watching movies in your pillow and blanket haven is a must!. Put on your favorite movie, watch a classic, or watch something new and enjoy the night!
- 6. Do fun activities:** After, or instead of, the movie you could enjoy the night doing fun activities. Solve jigsaw puzzles, apply face masks, play a board game with your family, watch YouTube, play video games, draw pictures, play guitar, call a friend, and all the other fun things to do at night!
- 7. End the night with God:** Through all of this, we have to remember to be grateful that God gave us this cozy night and everything good that's happened to us. So, just ending the night with God and thanking him for everything He's done for you will make Him, and you, infinitely happier.

8. DIYs to do

Face Mask

(Test a little on your arm first to make sure it won't irritate your skin)

- 2 tbsp of honey
- 1 tbsp of lemon juice
- Mix the honey and lemon, then apply on your face. After 10 minutes, or when it is dried, rinse off

Sugar scrub

- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup olive or coconut oil
- Gently scrub for 30-60 seconds on your lips or anywhere you want to remove the dead skin and soften
- Rinse off

Homemade Thick Hot Chocolate

- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2 cups milk
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 cup of chocolate chips
- Melt the butter and the cornstarch in a small pot. After they are mixed together, put in the 2 cups of milk and sugar. Let it simmer, then add the chocolate chips. Let it thicken for a couple of minutes, then serve while warm.

Brownie in a mug

- 1 egg
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tbsp flour
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- (Optional) 2 tbsp chocolate chips
- Whisk the egg in a mug and then add the sugar, oil, flour, cocoa powder, and optional chocolate chips. Cook for 1 minute and 40 seconds in the microwave, then enjoy!

