CHRISTMAS

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At this time of year, the thoughts of most people, voluntarily or otherwise, turn towards Christmas and the preparations for it. In all the flurry of pre-Christmas activity, though, many people tend to lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas.

In an effort to instil into the minds of our readers some contemplative thoughts about Christmas, we offer the following list of things that Christmas means to us. Naturally, as a logologist we checked the word Christmas in a number of references to gain some idea as to its true range of meaning. Our findings, we hope, will put Christmas into its proper perspective. Christmas is:

- an annual church festival kept on December 25 or by the Armenians on January 6 in memory of the birth of Christ, celebrated generally by a particular church service, special gifts and greetings, and observed in most Christian communities as a legal holiday
- any similar festivity or revelry
- the Christmas season
- the festival season from Christmas Eve till after New Year's or (especially in England) till Epiphany
- Christmas day, the 25th of December
- Christmas holidays
- something connected with the celebration of Christmas, as a gift
- any gift or present bestowed at Christmas time
- Christmas decorations
- evergreens used for decorations at Christmas, as the European holly
- the holly, Ilex Aquifolium
- something special to drink at Christmas time
- a Texas term for whiskey
- a cake made on Christmas Eve
- any ostentatious display, as of clothing, jewelry, etc.
- a garish article of clothing or jewelry, or one that sparkles
- a shower of metallic foil dropped by an airplane or released from an artillery shell to jam enemy radar or communications systems
- a mild, euphemistic expletive
- payday
- a baptismal name, now uncommon as a boy's name and practically unknown as a girl's
- a frequent surname for one born at Christmas
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