

Here are some greetings from more of our friends around the world. Maybe you can find where they live on a world map!



From Juanita in Chile - Many blessings for your ministry that continues to grow. I minister to children through soccer and I hand out your PAL page to them there which always blesses them...
From Pastor Shakeel in Pakistan - Thank you for the PAL page. We visited your website and really feel blessing from your precious work of God. My wife and I are founders of a children's chapel which started with only 5 children but now has about 600 in different villages in this tribal area.
From Leticia in Mexico - I'd like to send you 1,000 e-mails to thank you for your PAL page which is so encouraging - keep it up!
From Rev. Patrick in Uganda - I am really excited about your concern for the work of God...keep on sending me World Kids PAL page because we have a children's ministry with 104 orphans...
From Aura in Nicaragua - After reading the PAL page I congratulate you - it's tremendous! I've printed it out to share in our first children's mission service.

Finally Pastor Sika in Togo wrote us a lovely long greeting which unfortunately we don't have room to share in full but he sends warm Christmas greetings to all of you around the world and is so thankful that the PAL page is helping him and his coworkers learn more and pray better for other believers all over the world. For those who would like even more info about Christians in other countries VOM is soon putting some activity books on www.KidsOfCourage.com and they can be printed free of charge.

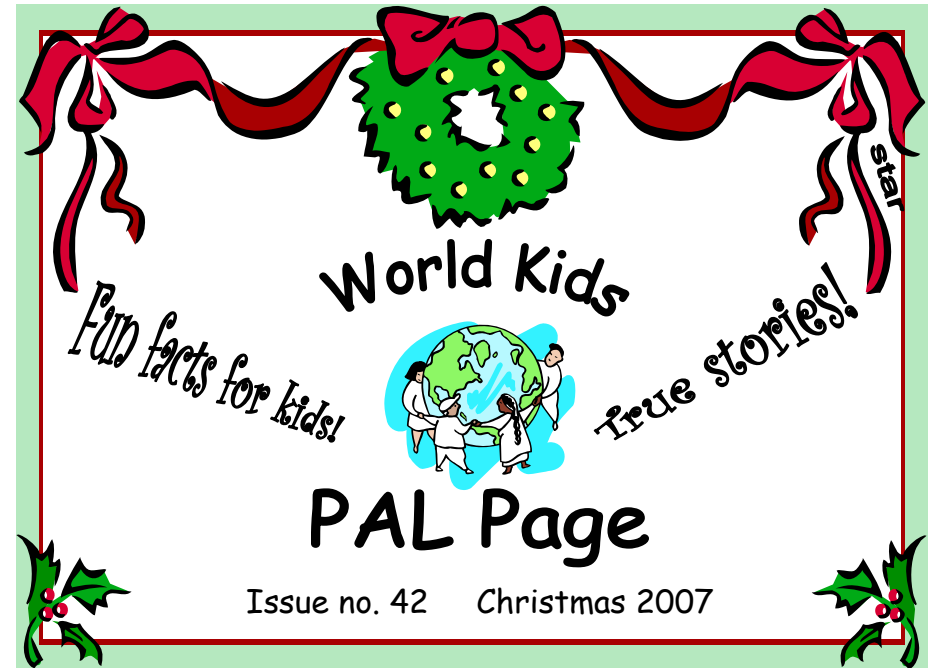


The Wisemen traveled far searching for Baby Jesus. See if you can search through this issue to find TEN words that are found in the Christmas story!

Have a wonderful and blessed Christmas and New Year, and I'll write again next year!

love from your friend, Shirley

Facts from: <http://christmas-world.freesevers.com> World Kids PAL Page is a ministry of IMOF Inc, 8069 FM 1251E, Henderson, TX. Tel: (903) 889-2233
E-mail: shirley@imofinc.org www.imofinc.org



How does YOUR family celebrate Christmas every year ?

Do you look forward to all going to Grandma's house for a big dinner of turkey or ham, and then exchanging presents? Do you decorate a tree and send lots of Christmas cards? Maybe you go to the midnight service at church on Christmas Eve and then enjoy hot chocolate when you get back home? Most of us who have grown up in a Christian home have different family traditions that make Christmas a very special time of the year. Many Christmas movies show Santa Claus, busy shopping scenes, and carol singers trudging through the snow. But that's because most of these movies are made in Europe or the USA! Christmas in many parts of the world is VERY different!



For Christians who live in the Southern Hemisphere (such as South America or Australia) it comes in the middle of SUMMER! Families often prefer to celebrate at a beach party or an outdoor barbecue! Maybe they decorate palm trees instead of fir trees!



In Argentina evergreen trees are decorated with cotton to look like snow for the summertime celebration, and in Brazil Santa Claus (Papai Noel) wears red silk because of the heat! Every country has its own special Christmas dishes - in Guatemala it's tamales; in Zimbabwe, Africa, it's roast ox; in Hungary it includes fresh wheat sprouts for the special Christmas salad; and in South Korea the children enjoy rice cake soup while dreaming of a visit from "Santa Grandfather"!

There are also many strange Christmas traditions that form part of the celebrations every year. In Caracas, the capital city of Venezuela, it is customary to roller-skate to a special church service held early in the morning. Before bedtime children tie one end of a piece of string to their big toe and hang the other end of the string out the window! The next morning, rollerskaters give a tug to any string they see hanging down! And in the Philippines, there is an even earlier church service called the "Mass of the Rooster" which starts at 4.00 a.m. and is announced by the sound of carols and church bells. Many people take their special star lanterns (called parols) with them as they walk to church in the dark.



Mary

In many countries where there are very few Christians or where the ruling government is against Christianity, Christmas day passes just as any other day. It is very hard for Christians who have to go to school or work and can only celebrate in secret.

How would YOU celebrate Christmas if you had to do it in secret, and you couldn't have any decorations or gifts?



What do YOU think is the most important part of the Christmas celebrations? The special food? The presents? Our traditions? Hopefully we would all say that it is remembering the story of how Jesus was born (you can read this in Matthew 2 and Luke 2), but after that, I think most of us would say that the most important thing is to celebrate it with our family!



Bethlehem

There are many, many children around the world who will have to celebrate this Christmas without any gifts or special food - just because they are so poor that their families have nothing extra to make it a special time. Some do not even have a home because they are refugees who had to run away because of a war, or they have to live on the street because they lost their home. There are also millions of children who do not even have a family because their parents died or abandoned them! During this happy, busy Christmas season, let us all take time to remember that there are so many that truly have NOTHING!

True story!

donkey

But JESUS knows how it feels to be poor and homeless! His mother gave birth to him while she was far from home on a journey, and no-one even invited her into their house to have the baby! She and her husband Joseph could only find a shelter or cave used by



sheep and other animals, to provide a place for their tiny baby to come into the world. Even after Baby Jesus was born, his family had to run away to another country for a couple of years because it was far too dangerous for them to live in their own

country. But God took care of them and Jesus grew up to tell and show everyone about how much our Heavenly Father loves us.

The Christmas Story is truly a wonderful one of love and hope that can bless all who hear it! There are many of our friends around the world who dedicate their lives to sharing the Gospel with children, especially children who are desperately poor or have no family. We have been able to send packages of balloons, stickers and other small gifts as well as some donations, so that they can hold special events to bless children this Christmas time. Please pray for them and if you also want to help, get in touch with us!



Joseph

This is a photo we just received from Saroj in India of a special Christmas event last week (you may remember that we shared about Saroj in last month's issue).