

# The TRUTH

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A Publication of the

**RBO** *Our  
Second Century*

*Christ is Born!*

*Glorify Him!*



**N**ow it came to pass in those days that a decree went forth from Caesar Augustus that a census of the whole world should be taken. This first census took place while Cyrenus was governor of Syria. And all were going, each to his own town, to register. And Joseph also went from Galilee out of the town of Nazareth into Judea to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem - because he was of the house and family of David - to register, together with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a

*Continued on page 2*

# The TRUTH

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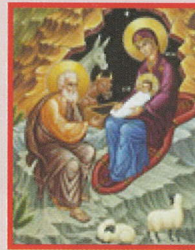
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## Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The Birthday of the Saviour is here, and we are once again reminded that Christmas is a family day-whether it be our immediate family, our church family or our organizational family. It is a day of reunions and feasting, and a day of joyous gifting.

We hope that this Christmas will enrich your lives with deeper love and understanding that peace, joy and prosperity may accompany you throughout the coming New Year. With these sentiments in our hearts we bid you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Atty. Basil Russin, President  
and Officers of the RBO

### Continued from cover

manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds in the same district living in the fields and keeping watch over their flocks by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of God shone round about them, and they feared exceedingly. And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be to all the people, for today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling

clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace among men of good will."

And it came to pass, when the angels had departed from them into heaven, that the shepherds were saying to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord had made know to us." So they went with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

— Luke 2:1-16.

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## From Candles to Electric Lights

**E**lectric Christmas lights didn't become common in American households until the 1930s, but like so many other Christmas traditions, they were born in the 1800s.

In 1871, businessman Edward Hibberd Johnson hired a young inventor named Thomas Edison at the Automatic Telegraph Company. When Edison left to form his own company, Johnson went with him. Edison famously patented the electric light bulb in 1880, and Johnson invested some of his own money to start the Edison Lamp Company.

Meanwhile, Christmas was candlelit, and that gave Johnson a great idea. He wired together 80 multicolor Edison bulbs, and wrapped them on a Christmas tree. The decoration got a lot of press, and while they were still too expensive for most people to afford, Christmas was suddenly a lot brighter.

## Stay fit and healthy as you celebrate

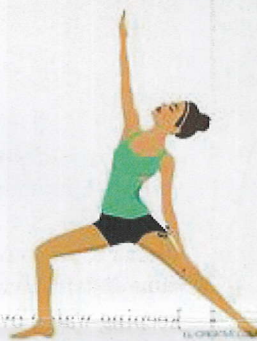
The holidays are full of temptation, and staying fit while everyone else is indulging in treats can be tough. If you don't want to start the new year with unwanted pounds, follow this advice from the *Abilene-RC* website:

• **Stick to your exercise routine.** Keep going to the gym or working out at home on your usual schedule. Recruit a buddy if necessary to keep you on track.

• **Choose fitness activities you enjoy.** Don't force yourself to do exercises that you find boring, or excruciatingly difficult. Pick something as simple as yoga, dance classes, or a light run that you'll actually do, not avoid.

• **Start out slow.** If you're starting an exercise routine during the holidays as a proactive measure, take things easy at first. Remember to stretch and warm up before any physical activity. Work with a personal trainer, at least up front, to learn how to get results without injuring yourself.

• **Watch your food intake.** It's all right to have a big dinner to celebrate, but don't overdo it. Stick to reasonable portions, and don't go back for seconds, thirds, or fourths.



## Shovel the snow safely this winter

**S**now is lovely to look at, but it's a pain to shovel. Worse, shoveling can cause injury if you're not careful.

Here's how to safely keep your walk and driveway clear in the winter, from *Better Homes & Gardens*:

✱ **Do some prep work.** Before snowy weather hits, be sure to remove any obstacles from the path you'll be clearing—sticks, stones, doormats, toys, cords, or anything else that might be hidden under the snow and cause you to trip while you're working outside.

✱ **Perform seasonal maintenance.** If you use a snow blower, don't just leave it in the garage all year until you need it in the winter. Drain the gas before you store it away in the spring, or replace it with a stabilized fuel. Otherwise, the gas can separate and create problems for the engine when you operate it. If you forget to drain the tank, empty it and replace the fuel before using it again.

✱ **Don't wait for the snow to stop.** It may sound counter intuitive, but it's not necessarily a bad idea. The more snow that piles up, the heavier your job. Shoveling or using the snow blower before the snow stops falling means you're not exerting yourself as much. You'll save strain in your back and arms. Also, more frequent shoveling prevents snow and ice from freezing on the sidewalk, which is harder to remove and makes the surface more slippery.

✱ **Remember pets and other animals.** Make sure your dog or cat is inside before you start up your snow blower. If you use something to melt the ice, look for a product that doesn't contain harmful chemicals that can harm pets walking over it. Wipe off your own pets' paws when they come inside, and keep the packaging safely out of their reach.

here & there

"All the Christmas presents in the world are worth nothing without the presence of Christ."  
— David Jeremiah

"Love the giver more than the gift."  
— Brigham Young

"Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts."  
— Janice Maeditere

"Christmas magic is silent. You don't hear it — you feel it, you know it, you believe it."  
— Kevin Alan Milne

"He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree."  
— Roy L. Smith

My job is not to be easy on people. My job is to take these great people we have and to push them and make them even better.

— Steve Jobs

## Early Nativity celebrations

**T**he early Christian Church did not observe Christ's Nativity. The first believers rather were concerned with the death, resurrection and the imminent second coming of the Lord. Their chief feast was thus the Resurrection.

The second most important feast was that of Theophany. It commemorated the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, the manifestation of the Holy Trinity, as well as His appearance as the Savior for the first time. The feast had its origins in the port city of Alexandria in Egypt and then spread to Jerusalem and the entire Orthodox Christian world. By the end of the fourth century, St. John Chrysostom described the Christmas celebration at the manger site in Bethlehem as involving the consecration of the baptismal water and the rite of the baptism of the catechumens.

Around the year 400, an Orthodox nun, Mother Egeria, wrote about Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem. She noted that on Christmas Eve the bishop and faithful spent the night in prayer at the Cave of the Nativity. At daybreak, the bishop led the faithful to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in

Jerusalem where services were held by the light of thousands of candles. Light always had an important part in the Theophanic Feast with meditations on the star of Bethlehem and the visit of the Magi.

Christmas was first mentioned in Rome about the year 336 during the reign of Constantine. The first Christian emperor declared that Sunday (the Lord's Day and Resurrection Day) be a state holiday and that Christmas be observed on Dec. 25.

**In the city of Antioch, St. John Chrysostom declared Christmas a feast in 386.**

The date was convenient for it coincided with that of the pagan feast of the cult of the invincible sun which marked the conquest of the winter by the sun. Christ's resurrection was connected with the symbolism of the sun in that the Lord's Day was identified with Sun-day. Likewise on Dec. 25, the feast of light was combined with the celebration of Christ's Nativity. While not all historians accept this theory,

an old tradition holds that Jesus' conception took place in early spring (note the feast of the Annunciation on March 25-April 7). The addition of nine months leads to the traditional dates for Christmas.

As Christmas became an official feast, there was less emphasis on Theophany. Roman Christians emphasized the coming of the Wise Men and the appearance of the star while Orthodox Christians, in their solemn celebrations, referred to the feast as "Little Christmas."

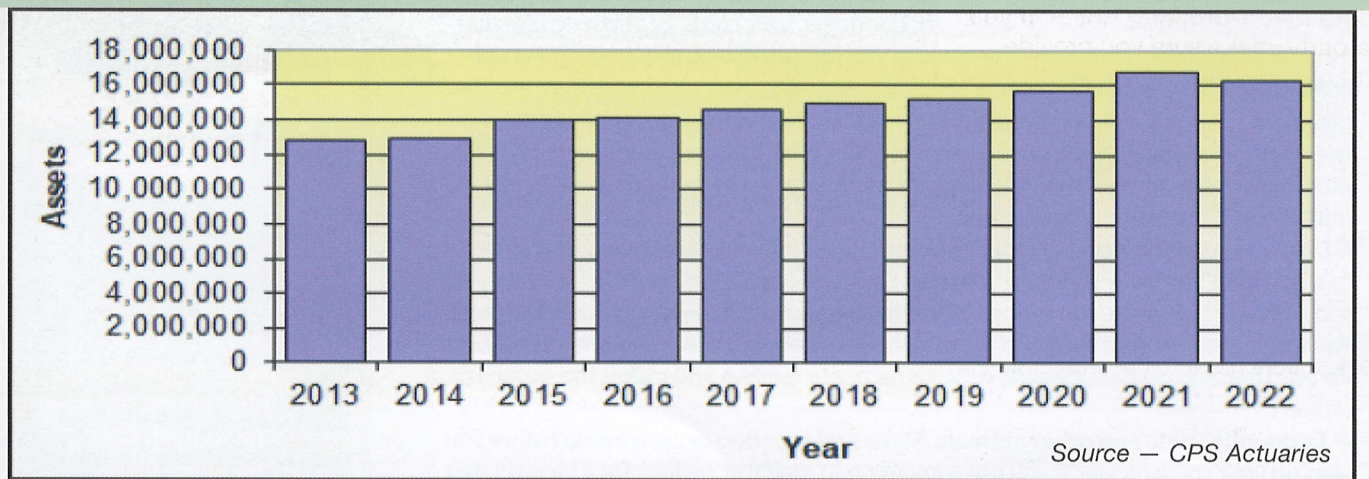
In the city of Antioch, St. John Chrysostom declared Christmas a feast in 386. In Constantinople, St. Gregory Nazianzus introduced the celebration in 379. The ancient see of Jerusalem, however, did not officially accept the Dec. 25 celebration until the sixth century. Armenian Christians refused to celebrate a separate feast from that of Theophany.

Christmas, as it was in the early days of Christianity, is a Feast of Light. Christ is worshiped as the God-Light sent into a dark world. Once again our dark and sinful world needs the Light of Christ to show the way.

**RBO on the internet - [heather@rbo.org](mailto:heather@rbo.org); Web page: [www.rbo.org](http://www.rbo.org)  
RBO forms are available on-line at: [www.rbo.org](http://www.rbo.org)**

## RBO Assets

After reaching an all-time high of almost \$16.7 million in 2021, assets decreased by \$486,000 in 2022. The following graph illustrates how assets have changed over the last 10 years.



The Society produced a positive cash flow from operations (which is not the case for many other small fraternal) in 2022, although it was smaller than the prior years. This means that the premiums and investment income collected exceeds the benefits and expenses being paid out.

## Personal safety precautions for the holiday season

**W**ith the holidays upon us, it's a good time to focus on basic safety for the season. Parties, decorations, and increased travel create more risk of accidents or emergencies occurring during this time of year.

*Below are a few tips from the American Red Cross for a safe holiday:*

- **Take care with holiday lighting.**

Candles can be dangerous. Make sure you burn them in safe areas, away from other decorations and combustible materials. Never leave children unattended in a room with lit candles. Keep candles, matches, and lighters out of the reach of children, as well. Never display lit candles in windows, and never use them as decorations for trees, either.



- **Make sure decorations are made of flame-retardant or noncombustible materials.**

Do not use candles during parties. If you are going to allow guests to smoke, make sure you provide large, deep ashtrays, and check them often. When the party is over, check upholstery and trash cans for cigarette butts that may be smoldering.

- **Choose and keep fresh trees.**

Choose a fresh tree, and use a sturdy stand. Do not place the tree near heat sources or near exits. Water your tree daily. If you buy an artificial tree, make sure it's flame retardant. If you decide to hang stockings on your mantel, make sure you don't use your fireplace for fires.

- **When you attend a party, always designate a non-drinking driver.** If you throw a party, make sure you provide plenty of nonalcoholic drinks for those who will be driving.

### A Charlie Brown Christmas

It may be hard to imagine that this beloved TV special inspired by Charles Schulz's Peanuts comic strip was first rejected by CBS executives. But when it finally aired on December 9, 1965, almost half of all U.S. TV sets were tuned to the broadcast, and the show went on to win an Emmy, a Peabody, an enduring following and even a trend of "Charlie Brown" Christmas trees. "I never thought it was such a bad little tree," Linus says in the special. "It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love."

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### It's their nature

A monk was praying in the forest. There was a clean pond nearby. After getting up from his prayers, he started drinking from the pond, and he saw bees flailing in the water, close to drowning.

He tried to lift a bee out, but as soon as his fingers got close, it stung him. Even after being stung many times, the monk kept trying to get bees out.

A man standing nearby asked the monk, "Why are you taking them out if they are stinging you over and over?"

The monk replied, "Stinging is the nature of a bee. It's my nature to save a life."

### The lighter side



### A woman and god

A woman named Shirley was from Beverly Hills. One day, she had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital. While on the operating table, she had a near-death experience.

Shirley saw God and asked, "Is this it?" God said, "No, you have another 30-to-40 years to live."

Upon her recovery, Shirley decided to stay in the hospital and have collagen shots, cheek implants, a face-lift, liposuction, and breast augmentation. She even had someone dye her hair. She figured since she had another 30-to-40 years, she might as well make the most of it.

Shirley walked out of the hospital lobby after the last operation and was killed by an ambulance speeding up to the hospital.

She arrived in front of God and said, "I thought you said I had another 30-to-40 years!"

God replied, "Shirley? I didn't recognize you!"

*A generous donation was made to the Ss. Cyril & Methodius Scholarship Fund from Nancy A. Gresko (Lodge 93) and Ronald Joseph Bane Jr. (Lodge 182). Deborah M. Donlick (Lodge 216), made donations to all three scholarship funds.*

## SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*I wish to donate to the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Scholarship Fund to help young members of the R.B.O. receive a college education. Please acknowledge my contribution by publishing same in The Truth.*

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*All checks should be made payable to the Russian Brotherhood Organization, Ss. Cyril and Methodius Scholarship Fund and mailed to the Home Office of the R.B.O., 301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B, Yardley, PA 19067-7721*

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### Christmas trees facts

- The first decorated Christmas tree was in Riga, Latvia in 1510.
- The first Christmas tree retail lot in the United States was started in 1851 in New York by Mark Carr.
- Christmas trees take an average of 7 - 10 years to mature.
- Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states including Hawaii and Alaska.
- 98% of all trees are grown on farms.
- In 1856 Franklin Pierce, the 14th President of the United States, was the first President to place a Christmas tree in the White House.
- President Coolidge started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the White House lawn in 1923.
- Other types of trees such as cherry and hawthorns were used as Christmas trees in the past.
- Using small candles to light a Christmas tree dates back to the middle of the 17th century.
- Christmas tree lights were first mass produced in 1890.

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 Great for your Grandchildren

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0	\$905	\$2,255
10	\$1,245	\$3,105
20	\$1,695	\$4,230
40	\$3,065	\$7,655
60	\$5,375	\$13,430

### FEMALE

Age at Issue	\$10,000	\$25,000
0	\$780	\$1,935
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40	\$2,750	\$6,860
60	\$4,830	\$12,060

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# LODGE SECRETARIES

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## Sauerkraut with Peas

- 2 cups or large can of sauerkraut
- 2 cups of cold water
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 tibs. flour
- 3 tibs. oil
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. caraway seeds
- 1 medium onion
- 1/2 cup yellow split peas
- 2 cups of water
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 red apple, grated

Rinse sauerkraut in cold water once and drain it. Add to sauerkraut pepper, 1 tsp. salt, caraway seeds, bay leaves, grated apple. Cut up and fry onion in oil until slightly brown and tender. Add to kraut and cook for 1/2 hour. Wash and cook split yellow peas in 2 cups of water, clove of garlic and salt. Cook for 1 hour. Blend flour in oil from onion until flour is slightly brown. Add to sauerkraut. Simmer this mixture for one minute to blend the flavors. It should be quick thick.

## Stuffed Cabbage

- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 head cabbage, 2-1/2 - 3 lbs.
- 2-1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 large onion
- 1 cup mushrooms
- 3 tibs. oil
- 2 tibs. chopped dill

Fry onions, mushrooms slightly. Add onions, mushrooms, salt, pepper, dill to rice. Steam cabbage. Cut thick part of cabbage leaf. Place ball of rice mixture in the cabbage leaf and roll as for a jelly roll, pushing ends with fingers. Put in roaster. Cover with tomatoes (1 large can or 2 lbs. fresh tomatoes strained), and 1 cup water. Bake 1 hour at 350 F.

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