

THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS ROSE



Legend says that a little shepherd girl of Bethlehem followed after the shepherds who had received the angels' message and were journeying to the stable. All the shepherds took gifts for the Christ child, but the little girl had no gift to give.

As she lagged behind the others, somewhat sad at heart, there suddenly appeared an angel in a glow of light, who scattered beautiful white roses in her path. Eagerly she gathered them up in her arms and laid them on the manger as her gift to the little Lord Jesus.

THE LEGEND OF THE POINSETTIA



It was Christmas Eve and outside the small Mexican church a little girl, Lola, wept and prayed:

'Oh please Lord, help me! I have not even a small flower-gift to place beside the manger to show the Baby Jesus how much I love Him.'

Suddenly, in a brilliant light, Lola saw her guardian angel beside her.

'The Holy Child knows you love Him, Lola. He sees the many kind deeds you do for others. Gather those plants that grow beside the road.'

'But they are weeds!' exclaimed Lola.

'Weeds are only plants for which man has not yet discovered God's purpose,' said the angel with a smile.

Lola entered the church carrying the straggly greens and reverently laid them beside the many flowers placed by villagers around the manger.

Suddenly gasps of astonishment echoed through the beautiful church as Lola's weeds changed into the most beautiful flame-red flowers!

Since that day, these flowers are known in Mexico as the *Flores de la Noche Buena* – the Christmas Flowers.

Christmas is more than a day in December;
It's the magic and love that we'll always
remember *Anon*

MARTIN LUTHER AND THE CHRISTMAS TREE CANDLES



Of the many Christmas tree stories and legends, a very special from Germany tells about Martin Luther, the great leader of the Reformation movement in the church about 500 years ago.

One December night, Martin Luther was on his way home through the woods. The night was especially bright and clear and thousands of stars twinkled and shimmered in the sky, like windows through which the light of heaven steamed down upon the earth. With joy, Martin Luther beheld how the starlight touched the snow-laden boughs of the forest fir trees, making their ice crystals glisten like diamonds.

Deeply moved, he decided to share his glimpse of this meeting of heaven and earth! He selected a small, fragrant fir tree and hurried home to his wife and children. There he tied little white candles to the tree's branches. When they were lit, he spoke to his children about the beauty of the stars shining upon the earth and of the Glory of our Heavenly Father who gave Jesus Christ to us to be the Light of the World.

True Christian Christmas

Christmas isn't showy gifts
Or glittering decoration;
It's honouring our Saviour, Jesus Christ
In humble adoration.

It's serving those less fortunate,
Meeting their needs before our own;
It's making sure at Christmas time
That no one is alone.

It's taking what we would have spent
On things that no one needs,
And using it to help someone
With service and good deeds.

Our Saviour showed us how to live
With charity, faith and service.
It makes the holidays a joy,
More peaceful, and less nervous.

So let's remember Christmas is
About our Saviour's birth;
That's the way to happiness,
The way to peace on earth.
By Joanna Fuchs