

# Christmas around the world . . .

**In Scandinavia—Denmark, Norway and Sweden—**Christmas is celebrated for a month.

**Saint Lucia's Day, December 13th,** opens the season. Lucia was a Christian girl who was martyred during the time of Emperor Diocletian. When the Christianized Vikings heard her story, they envisioned her shining figure with a halo of light. Because her Saint's Day is on December 13th, when the long hours of winter darkness will begin to wane, she became a favorite of the northern people.

The Day of Saint Lucia is celebrated all over Sweden. Early in the darkness of morning, the family is awakened by the youngest daughter who serves them coffee and Lucia buns and cakes in bed. She is dressed in white and on her head is a green wreath with candles. She sings, "Santa Lucia", an old Italian melody.

After Saint Lucia's day, presents are bought, wrapped and placed under the Christmas tree. A sheaf of grain is placed on a pole or tree so the birds, also, can rejoice.

Everyone gathers in the kitchen, decorated with candles, flowers and pine branches. On the stove is a large iron pot with drippings of pork, sausage and corned beef. Slices of wort bread are dipped into the liquid. When the dipping is finished, lunch is served in the dining room. The meal is a close family gathering and the menu has been the same for generations. Often it is prefaced by a smorgasbord. Then comes the lutefisk, generally made of sun-cured cod served with cream sauce. The meal is topped off with rice pudding or porridge containing a hidden almond. The person who gets the almond is supposed to be married during the following year.

After dinner the Christmas tree is lit and the presents, provided by *Jultomten*, are opened.

Christmas Day is a day of rest and religious observance. People going to the pre-dawn service carry torches and windows are lit with candles. Close by the church, worshippers throw their torches into a huge bonfire. At the door of the church they are met with the chorale: "How Brightly Burns the Morning Star."

December 26th is the day of hospitality, with children's parties and visitors. Young people dress in costumes and go door-to-door receiving gifts.

On Twelfth Night children dress in costumes—often depicting Bible characters—and, carrying stars mounted on poles, go from house to house singing hymns.

Saint Knuts' day, January 13th, ends the Christmas season. The day honors King Knut IV who ruled 1080-1086 and is revered for his pious nature and generosity to the poor. The Christmas tree is lit for the last time, then dismantled and taken outdoors with the wish: "May God bless your Christmas, / May it last till Easter."

**Syria**

The Christmas Season in Syria differs from that of most other countries. It begins on Saint Barbara's Day, December 4th, and continues to Epiphany.

On the eve of St. Barbara's Day a table of sweets made of nuts, sugar, honey and wheat is arranged. Wheat memorializes the dead and signifies resurrection of the soul. Children are taught unselfishness and thoughtfulness by sending sweets to the homes of the poor, saying, "May God bless you and bring you happiness every year. Father and mother beg you to accept these gifts from us."

At a party of dancing and singing. Wheat is cooked and flavored with sugar, rose water and candy. To demonstrate that they have learned the lessons of good Saint Barbara, the girls go, one at a time, to elderly women who anoint their eyes with a salve. A special mass is said in the churches of Saint Nicholas.

On Christmas Eve, a bonfire of vine stems is built in the church in honor of the Magi, who were cold after their long journey.

Christmas Day is observed quietly—a day of prayer and rejoicing. The children give their pennies to the

poor.

January 1, the Day of Circumcision, is the day gifts are exchanged. Children go house to house visiting. January 2nd is the women's day for visiting.

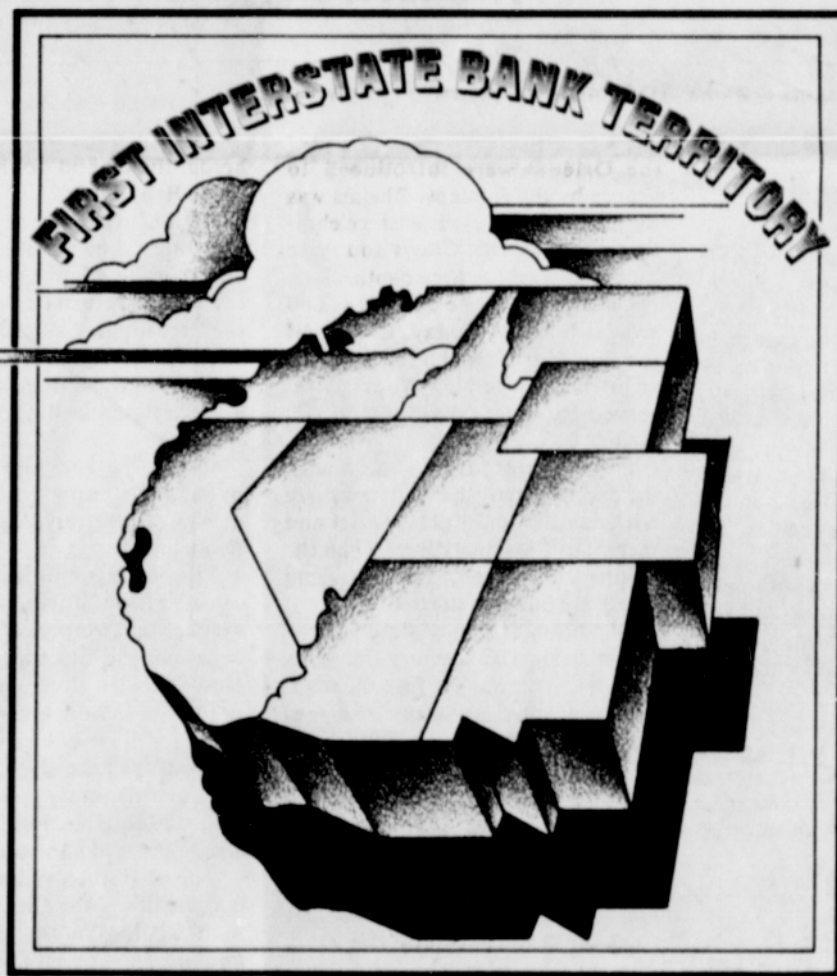
In Syria there is a common belief that on Epiphany every tree bends its trunk and inclines its branches in honor of the Christ Child.

In southern Syria the gentle camel of Jesus travels over the desert bringing gifts for the children. Children leave bowls of water and wheat for the camel. God children receive gifts; the other find black marks on their wrists.



On Christmas Eve in some French villages, a shepherd carries a lamb to Midnight Mass. The villagers carry candles and sing carols. The lamb reminds them of the shepherds who watched their flocks the night Jesus was born.

# Our Market Interest Account beats the money market funds. Our convenience beats everyone.



First Interstate Bank's new Market Interest Account beats the money market funds. Not just with higher interest, but with more convenience, liquidity, and security.

Our Market Interest Account gives you unlimited in-person or Day & Night Teller withdrawals and you have checking privileges—up to three checks plus three transfers a month. Unlike a money market fund, you can even arrange for automatic transfers into your account—a great way to save!

Something else the money market funds can't offer you is our security...FDIC insurance up to

\$100,000 plus the strength of the First Interstate Bank system with nearly \$40 billion in assets.

And, when you deal with First Interstate Bank, you have one thing no one else can offer: instant cash access to your account at any one of nearly 700 Day & Night Tellers and 900 offices in our 11 Western state territory.

Lots of financial institutions are offering what look like similar accounts. But no one comes close to giving you what First Interstate Bank gives you.

More for your money. At First Interstate Bank, it comes with the territory.

|   |
|---|
| Current Rate  |
| <b>9.0%</b>   |
| Annual percentage rate.<br>Rate guaranteed through January 10, 1983<br>on personal accounts of \$500,000 or less. |

## Market Interest Account

Minimum opening deposit—\$2,500.  
5 1/4% paid if average collected balance falls below \$2,500.

