



# Danny's Celtic Kids

"Celtic lands are where strange tales begin and happy endings are possible!"

Newsletter Issue 12

December 2006



## Danny's Corner

Hello, everyone! Christmas will soon be here, so in this issue of the newsletter, we are going to retell the story of the Scottish Rose. I have just released a new Christmas album, *A Celtic Christmas-Live in Concert*, which is available in both audio CD and video DVD, and the song about Christmas Roses is included in the performance. Both the CD and DVD are available from my website. I am also including the lyrics of the song in the newsletter so you can sing along.

### *The Scottish Rose*

Mary MacDubh was only 16 years old the first Christmas after the Battle of Culloden. She lived in a cave in the Highlands of Scotland and took care of four children younger than herself who were orphaned by the war. She was also great with child herself.

Though Mary worked hard trying to get the best for her new family of orphans, she wasn't able to provide much clothing for warmth or meat for their table. But, she thanked God for what they did have, never lost her faith, and taught the children to pray and to love God. Sometimes the people of the village would give scraps of meat and bread from their own tables to supplement the children's meager diet.

Mary wanted to give the children a Christmas gift. So, she took bits of tartan she found on the Culloden moor and made a sort of Noah's Ark by stuffing little plaid animals with dried heather and straw for the children to play with. She wanted the children and her own child, when it was born, to have a good Christmas.

On Christmas Eve, the time for her baby to be born was very near. Mary was cooking a stew from fish, leeks, and potatoes over a large fire she built in the entrance of the cave. An English noble journeying toward Fort William smelled the stew, stopped and invited himself and his wife to eat.



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### **A Traditional Irish Blessing**

May the sun shine all day long,  
Everything go right and nothing go wrong.  
May those you love bring love back to you  
And may all the wishes you wish come true!



The nobleman's wife who was a Scottish lady from the Lowlands secretly gave Mary a few bits of silver and three gold crowns to buy a Christmas meal at the village inn.

Mary and the children set out for the inn. When Mary tried to get a room, the English soldiers told the innkeeper to keep her out because the sounds of her giving birth to a baby would disturb them. So, Mary was turned away. But, the innkeeper and his wife gave Mary a donkey to carry her back up to her cave home in the mountains, some warm blankets, and a large hamper of food to comfort Mary and the children on Christmas Day.

That night, Mary's child was born. A kind, beautiful woman who was a stranger to Mary appeared and began to comfort her and help her through her time of need. The woman cooked a fine meal for the children and put them all to sleep in warm blankets by a cozy fire. Then, she told Mary to get some rest, she would see to everything. Mary asked the kind woman to set out her little gifts for the children, and the lady promised that she would. The lovely lady sang the most beautiful song Mary had ever heard, and she was so comforted by it that she went off to sleep with a smile on her face.

When Mary and the children woke up on Christmas morning, the lovely lady was gone. But, she had left a fine cradle for Mary's baby, food and cakes, and fine warm clothes for all of the children, Mary, and for Mary's new baby son.

In the cradle, Mary found a note that said, "Long ago, another Baby was born in a place such as this. Kings came to bring him gifts of silver and gold and costly incense and oils. They came to honor him. That Child now returns that favor to you and yours to prove his love for all of his children, especially the children of Scotland who have suffered for so long. And to remind you of his love, he will send you roses every Christmas."

When Mary and the children looked out on the new snow in the meadow that lay before the entrance to their cave home, they saw that in the footprints of the Lady, small rose bushes covered with blooms had sprung up.

Every Christmas after that for the rest of their lives, Mary and the children found roses growing on Christmas morning in footprints in the snow around their homes.





Here are some Christmas presents that need coloring!





### Christmas Roses (A Song)

My Grandfather always had roses for Christmas  
Brilliant red roses against the white snow.  
Roses are red for the children of Scotland.  
Just like the roses that blossomed long ago.

My Grandfather told me the story of Mary  
Brave Scottish lassie of just 16 years.  
Who on the first Christmas after Culloden  
Bore a wee bairn that all Scotland held dear.

The Bairn born to Mary there in the Highlands  
On Christmas Eve in a cave bitter cold  
With none to attend her as young Mary laboured  
Till the Queen of the Angles came down, it was told.

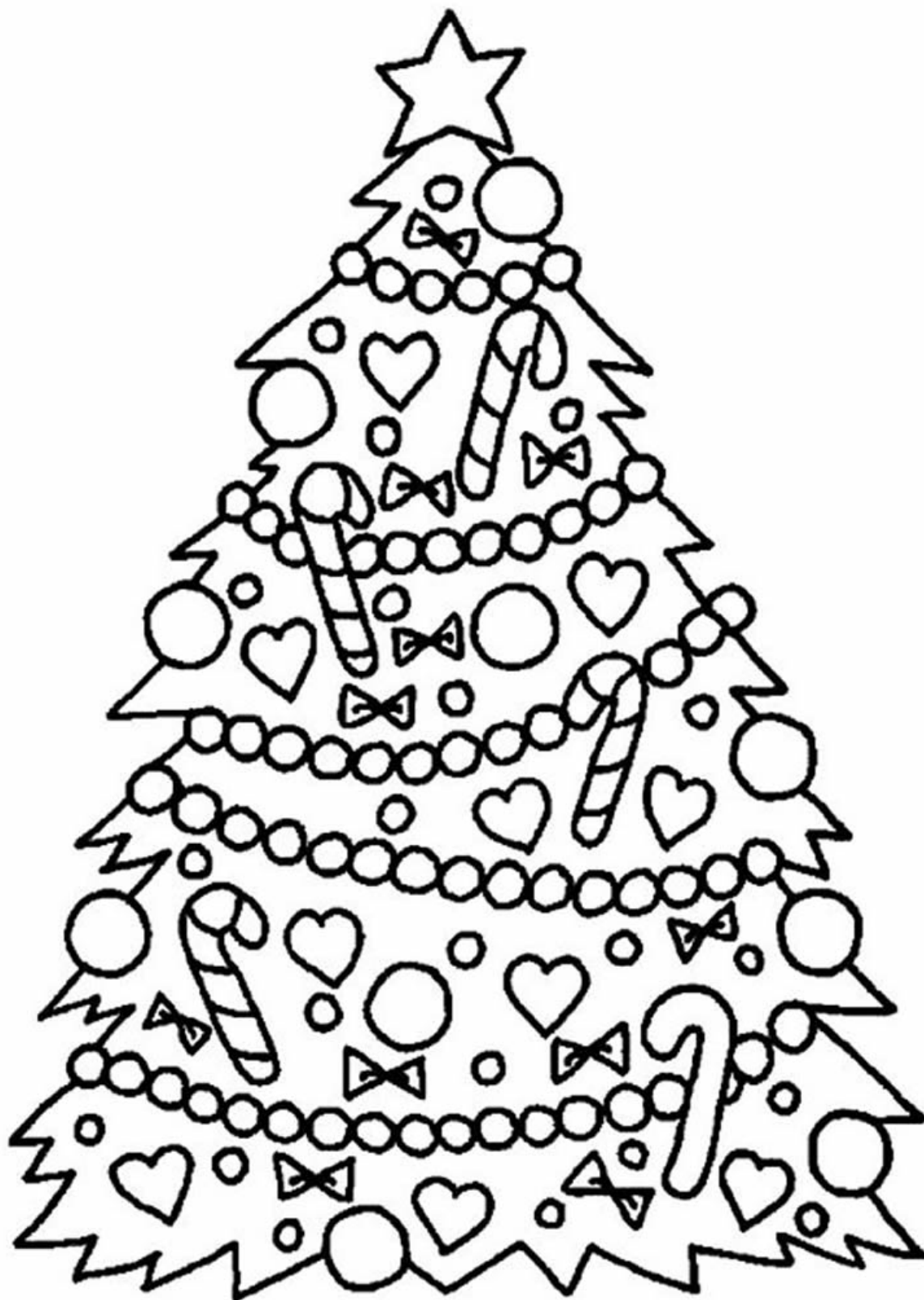
The Queen of the Angels kissed the wee orphans  
And comforted Mary as she brought forth her son  
While our Blessed Mother sang with the angels  
Hush, hush a bye, dear little one.

All through the Highlands how bold did the wind blow  
While the white snow fell so deep on the ground  
But in the morning when the Highlanders wakened  
In the snow where our Queen walked red roses they found.

The Highlands of Scotland were covered with white snow  
And the cold winter wind sang in low mournful tones  
Where the Queen of the Angles left her small footprints  
Brilliant red roses had blossomed and grown.



Color this Christmas tree!





## Storytelling at Christmas in Ireland



On Christmas night, the oldest member of the family gathers everyone around the hearth or the table and recounts the story of Mary and Joseph. The stories do not stop at Bethlehem. There are tales about the family, about the famine, about the great heroes and villains of Irish history, and even about the rocks and bogs and hills of the surrounding countryside. The possibilities for the storyteller are endless

For centuries, Irish children were deprived of an education either by poverty or by English law. The English believed that the Irish might be less troublesome if they were kept illiterate. The Irish, perhaps rebellious by nature, combated this by conducting classes in secret in the countryside. Hidden behind bushes and hedges, priests taught a few children of every generation to read and write. These makeshift schools were called "hedge schools".

The Irish people's second and most significant defense against their lack of education was, of course, storytelling. By making up a story for every occasion, by turning the meaning and importance of every event of life and turning into a parable, the Irish preserved their culture and taught their children a sense of history, identity, and justice.

Does your family have its storyteller? Do you know the history of your family? Why not talk to your parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts about their childhood memories. You could become your family historian and storyteller. Give it a try!





**Get your copy of Danny's book and music CD's.**

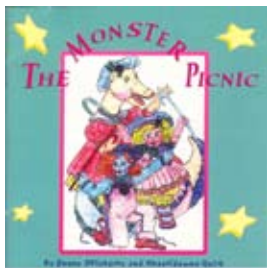
You can purchase them at [www.CelticNationsWorld.com](http://www.CelticNationsWorld.com) in the Celtic Shop, or at [www.DannyOFlaherty.com](http://www.DannyOFlaherty.com).



***Celtic Christmas***

CD \$17.00 plus shipping and handling.

**A Live Celtic Christmas Performance.**



***The Monster Picnic***

CD \$15.00 plus shipping and handling.

**Thirteen songs to delight children of all ages.**



***The Loch Ness Monster's Story***

Paperback \$15.00 plus shipping and handling.

**A story of the Loch Ness Monster family and their adventures.**

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[www.DannyOFlaherty.com](http://www.DannyOFlaherty.com)  
and  
[www.CelticNationsWorld.com](http://www.CelticNationsWorld.com)

We invite everyone to print a copy for themselves or for a friend. We also invite teachers to give copies to their students.

**Be sure to check [www.DannyOFlaherty.com](http://www.DannyOFlaherty.com) to see about having Danny bring his wonderful program of music and fun to your school.**