



The 12 days of Christmas

The "12 days of Christmas" is the period in Christian theology that mark the span between the birth of Christ and the coming of the Magi, the three wise men. It begins on December 25 (Christmas) and runs through January 6 (the Epiphany).

There has been a theory circulating that the song has some hidden religious meaning. It has been shared widely, but we do not know for sure if that is true. Nonetheless, it makes for a good review of some tenets of our faith!

The partridge in the pear tree represents **Jesus Christ**.

2 Turtle Doves = The **Old and New Testaments**

3 French Hens = **Faith, Hope and Charity**, the Theological Virtues

4 Calling Birds = the **Four Gospels** and/or the **Four Evangelists**

5 Golden Rings = The first **Five Books** of the **Old Testament**, the "Pentateuch," which gives the history of man's fall from grace.

6 Geese A-laying = the six **days of creation**

7 Swans A-swimming = the seven **gifts of the Holy Spirit**, the **seven sacraments**

8 Maids A-milking = the **eight beatitudes**

9 Ladies Dancing = the nine **Fruits of the Holy Spirit**

10 Lords A-leaping = the **Ten Commandments**

11 Pipers Piping = the **eleven faithful apostles**

12 Drummers Drumming = the twelve **points of doctrine** in the **Apostle's Creed**

Some families choose to observe the feast days of various saints (including St. Stephen on December 26) during the 12-day period and others by planning daily Christmas-related activities.

It is important to note that the **Liturgical Season of Christmas** is longer than twelve days and includes December 25 through the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.