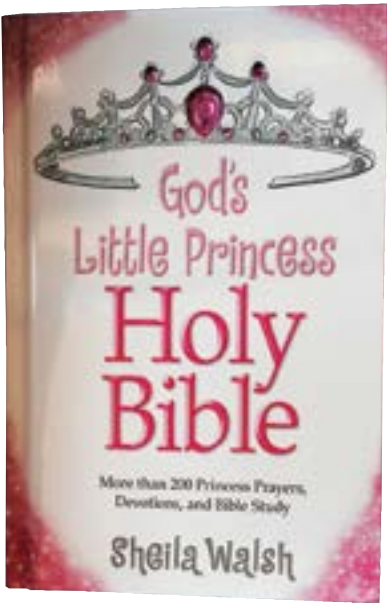




# WHAT TO BUY THE FAITHFUL



Published about two months ago, the God's Little Princess Holy Bible (\$26.99 at Family Christian Stores) is a New King James Version with added material by Sheila Walsh, intended for princess-inspired young girls, not just for earthly royalty. Also at Family Christian are Bible editions of popular games — it seems somehow appropriate that Taboo (\$29.99) and Apples to Apples (\$27.99) are there, with the importance of “shalt nots” and forbidden fruit in scripture.



You might already feel special about living here, but if you want a reminder, LifeWay Christian Store, 4121 Talmadge Rd., has “You Are Blessed in Ohio” merchandise. It makes sense to keep the gear in-state, but feel free to spread the Ohio glory widely. Pictured: Kitchen towel, \$9.74.



Here's an example of the blended season. Hanukkah takes place just before Christmas this year, ending on Christmas Eve. The Elf on the Shelf has become a popular figure to “help” children be good. Now comes the Mensch on a Bench (\$29.99), giving a Jewish flavor. Add a Star of David topper (\$19.99, both at area Bed Bath & Beyond stores) to mix up the holiday displays.

Christmas is on Dec. 25 for most in northwest Ohio (Jan. 7 for Orthodox Christians), but there are other religious holidays coming before it. Monday is Bodhi Day, celebrating when the Buddha was said to have achieved enlightenment while sitting under a Bodhi tree. Hanukkah, the Jewish festival of lights — commonly, a gift is given every day for eight days — begins at sundown on Dec. 16 and ends Dec 24. And Wiccans and other pagans give sacred observance to the December solstice on Dec. 21 (they call it Yule; it's the beginning of winter). Plus, Christmas' cultural presence means that many people exchange gifts Dec. 25 even though they're not followers of Jesus. Here are some present possibilities, including gifts that cross faith borders or that are sacred in other traditions.



### 'Celtic Santa'

The Wiccan religion has Celtic roots, and Once in a Blue Moon, 4348 Monroe St., has a “Celtic Santa” (\$25). The Irish might go for the crossover appeal.

— TK BARGER  
BLADE RELIGION EDITOR

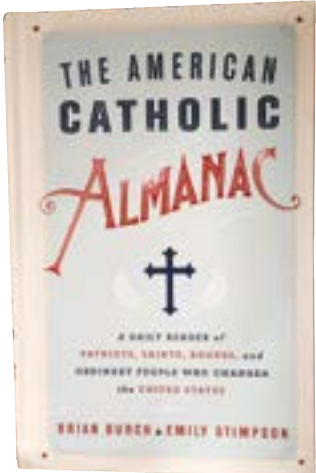


### Buddha

Buddha figures emphasize the tranquility of the outdoors, and their statues or just sculptures of their heads are put in yards and gardens. SteinMart, 3315 W. Central Ave., has a Buddha head (\$89.99) ready for placement.

### 'American Catholic Almanac'

For a Catholic fact for every day of the year, consider The American Catholic Almanac: A Daily Reader of Patriots, Saints, Rogues, and Ordinary People Who Changed the United States, by Brian Burch and Emily Stimpson (\$24 at Churchill's Religious Goods), produced by CatholicVote.org.



### Dreamcatcher

A religious item from the Native American culture that is seen outside of their culture is the dreamcatcher, a decorated webbed circle that's based in a sacred spider story, and it takes bad dreams at night while leaving the good ones, the day's sun destroying the nightmares. The Native Kichwa Arts store at Franklin Park Mall has dreamcatchers made by the Kichwa People of Ecuador, along with Navajo and Mexican dreamcatchers. At the store, Crazy Horse, who is from Ecuador, said that dreamcatchers are a “gift from God to humankind.” Pictured: Navajo dreamcatcher, \$85.99.

### Pope figurines

Two recent popes were canonized April 27, formally being named saints. Reger's, 4100 Secor Rd., has figurines of both St. John Paul II (\$12-\$275), and St. John XXIII (\$12). Collect all 80 saints who also were popes.



### Holy Aromas

The Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania have a commercial sideline in personal care. They developed, trademarked, and along with volunteers make the Holy Aromas line of bath and body washes. Holy Aromas has products for women, men, and dogs available at All Good Things Arts & Gifts on the grounds of their motherhouse at 6832 Convent Blvd., Sylvania. Among the items are bottles of lotion for \$2.75.

Prices and availablity subject to change.



### Nativity scene

The “little town of Bethlehem,” where Jesus was born, according to the Christmas story in the second chapter of Luke, today is a city in the Palestinian West Bank. Ten Thousand Villages in Archbold has nativity scenes handcrafted in the West Bank, carved from olive wood branches. There are also Ten Thousand Villages stores in Bluffton and Ann Arbor, and Georgette's Fair Trade Grounds & Gifts, 311 Conant St., Maumee, has some Ten Thousand Villages items.