

Newsletter

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Pompeiana, Inc.

December, 1976

"FESTIVA CHRISTI MISSA TOTIS
ET TOTIS BONA NOX!"



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Publication Dates: The tenth of August, October, December,
February, April, and June.



COVER PICTURE: While stopping at the Glendale Shopping Center, Indianapolis, Indiana, Santa graciously consented to don a Roman helmet while listening to the Christmas wishes of a toga-clad admirer.

Pompeiana Praefectus Salutem Dicit
Litterarum Classicarum Studiosis!

The zoning hearing for the property on Guion Road in Indianapolis has been continued until January 5, 1977. We have met with the residents of this area several times this fall and are hopeful that the Metropolitan Development Commission will grant the zoning and we will be able to move ahead in plans for the reconstruction of the House of Marcus Loreius Tiburtinus.

On December 7 four hundred Indianapolis area students will participate in the second annual Latin Day program coordinated by Pompeiana to be held on the campus of Butler University. Following is a list of our speakers and titles of their presentations:

Thomas Binford, Indiana National Bank,

"A Businessman Speaks Out For Latin"

Panel Discussion: Latin--The Most Practical Art,

conducted by John Helms, Valparaiso University,

Ian Thomson, Indiana University, and Don Goertz,

Ball State University

John Bruyn, Indiana-Purdue University of Indianapolis,

"Ancient Mechanical Devices and Technology"

Dave Hermansen, Ball State University,

"Latin: An Architect's View"

Michael Kumpf, Valparaiso University,

"Latin and Science"

George Rice, Butler University,

"Latin: A Lawyer's View"

Mrs. Anne Shullenberger, Museum of Art,

"Classical Influences in Art"

Burt Steiner, Butler University,

"Classical Greek"

Nicholas Vesper, Butler University,

"Latin and Astronomy"

Miss Ruth Weber, Eli Lilly and Company,

"Latin: A Doctor's View"

Thank you for all of your support during this past year,
and I wish each of you a very happy holiday season!

Bernard F. Barcio

CHRISTMAS -- OUR HERITAGE FROM THE PAST

In early Rome, festively commemorating the day of one's birth was an exclusive right reserved for the gods and a few emperors who dared assume the prerogative for themselves. The average Roman did not receive gifts on his birthday. Instead he received and gave gifts during Saturnalia, a Roman festival in honor of the god Saturn, which was celebrated in ancient Rome from December 17 to 24. It was this festival of Saturnalia coupled with the celebration of December 25 as the birthday of SOL INVICTUS which set the groundwork for the adoption of December 25 as the day on which later Christians would celebrate the Mass in honor of Christ (Christ's Mass).

The Early Christian Church had two basic objections against celebrating the birthday of its Savior. First, the exact date of Jesus' birth is nowhere recorded in the Bible, nor is there any record that Jesus observed his own birthday or that his disciples observed it. The second reason was the belief that it was wrong (a sin according to a view expressed by the church father Origin in A.D. 245) even to think of keeping Christ's birthday.

While the custom of celebrating Saturnalia goes back to the most ancient times, the worship of SOL INVICTUS, the unconquerable sun, was not introduced into Rome until later, and then surreptitiously by soldiers who had become acquainted with the divinity while serving in the eastern realm of the empire. In A.D. 218 the emperor Elagabalus became so involved with the worship of SOL INVICTUS that he attempted to replace Jupiter with the new divinity. Jupiter, however, regained his old position of authority, albeit briefly, when Elagabalus died. In A.D. 273, the emperor Aurelian became enamored with SOL INVICTUS and dedicated a splendid temple to the divinity on its birthday, December 25.

Although as a youth Constantine had followed the example of his father, Constantius, in accepting the Sun God as his protective deity, he later accepted Christianity after winning a battle with Maxentius during which he had placed himself and his army under the protection of the Christian's God. By 312 A.D. Constantine considered himself as designated by the Christian God to rule the Roman world. Constantine showed

his great dexterity in straddling the religious fence which separated Christians from Sun worshippers in 321 A.D. when he declared Sunday a general holiday for both Christians and pagans, with the former celebrating it as the "Lord's Day" and the latter regarding it as the "day of the Sun-god." With equal political skill, Constantine resisted the pressures of the Christian church to outlaw December 25 as the culmination of Saturnalia and the birthday of SOL INVICTUS. Instead, he allowed the Romans to continue celebrating their December 25 festival, substituting Christ for the solar deity. Once the early Christians overcame their reluctance to copy the pagan custom of celebrating the birthday of their God, the December date for Christ's "birth" quickly gained acceptance throughout the Roman Empire. Constantinople accepted the Christmas festival in A.D. 380, parts of Asia Minor in 382, Alexandria, Egypt, around 430 and Jerusalem about 440.

Today, the celebration of Christ's Mass remains a festival froth with both pagan and Christian symbolism, with elements such as the use of evergreen boughs dating back to the life and fertility customs of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia (reflecting the use of evergreens in Pagan Europe to frighten away evil spirits during the New Year season) and the use of nativity scenes introduced by St. Francis of Assisi in the Eleventh Century A.D.



Sounds of Latin

Our land is alive with the sounds of Latin
With themes that have lived for two thousand years .
Wherever we look there are sounds of Latin
My heart wants to sing each refrain it hears .
Our lips daily speak in the language of Greek
and Latin, although unaware;
Our dress is elite in a pattern sweet,
with that neat Roman flair;
The games that we play on Olympics Day,
and our theater scenes;
The laws that we make when the Senate convenes --
Roman way;
Our militant schemes and our soldiers' technique
Were founded in Rome centuries before,
All these are the sounds from the Latin and Greek
And there's still much more!

This was the refrain heard by 20,000 shoppers on
October 23 and 24, 1976, as they walked through the Ala
Moana Shopping Center (Hawaii's largest) during the Foreign
Language Fair .



Pictured at left is the
booth created by the Latin
students of St. Andrew's
Priory School, Honolulu,
Hawaii, under the direction
of Mrs. Dorry Wollstein.
Manning the booth at the
moment is Carolyn Chong,
a Latin II student .



These "Roman Soldierettes" are members of the 8th Grade Latin Class . Dressed as a drill team version of Roman soldierettes, they did a drill to an adaptation of "Do-Re-Mi".



Girls modeling the ancient and modern adaptations of Greek and Roman dress conducted a Roman Fashion Show accompanied by the Latin Club Singers .



In prīmā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi perdice(m i)n ramō pirī.

In secundā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi dās columbās et ...

In tertiā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi trēs gallinās,

In quartā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi quar'avēs voc'tēs,

In quintā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi quin'aur'an'lōs,

In sextā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi sex ans'rēs par'tēs,

In sept'ā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi septem cygnos nantes,

In oct'ā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi oc'virg'ēs mulg'ēs,

In nonā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi novem dom'nās sal'tēs,

In dec'mā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi dec'per'ōs sal'tēs,

Undec'mā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi undec'fist'es can'tēs,

Dūdec'mā diē Christī, amātor dat mihi dūdec'tym'na pul'tēs,

(Written by Jeff Dohner, Jeff Calder, Steve Etter, and
Debbie Privett--students of Mrs. Nancy Mack, Wayne High
School, Fort Wayne, Indiana.)



CHARIATHON FOR LATIN!

The Second Annual Chariathon for Latin in Indiana was held November 6, 1976, on the Canal Deck of Broad Ripple Village, Indianapolis, Indiana. Eighteen schools participated in this event to raise funds for the House of Marcus Loreius Tiburtinus to be reconstructed in Indianapolis.

The Chariathon was divided into three two-hour heats. A trophy was awarded to the winning chariot in each heat.

Pictured below are students from Crispus Attucks High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, who won the second heat.



(Indianapolis Star Photo,
Photographer: Frank Fisse)

NOTAE MISCELLANEA E

One of the world's first shorthand systems was invented by Marcus Tiro in Rome . It consisted of 5,000 signs, one of which has survived--&, the ampersand--which is used today in hundreds of languages .

In 1776 the use of "E Pluribus Unum" was suggested as the official motto to appear on the Great Seal of the United States . In 1873, Congress passed a law to place the famous motto on all coins . Since then "E Pluribus Unum" has been stamped on one side of all cents, nickels, dimes, quarters, half-dollars, and old silver dollars .

The following questions were recently asked on TV quiz shows:

"Suppose Jove was giving a banquet and invited five gods and goddesses . Who would check into the cloak room (1) a 3-pronged trident, (2) a caduceus, (3) an anvil, (4) a lyre, and (5) an owl?"

"Why would millinery be important to Hecate?"

"Who are The Furies?"

Mary Machado's students are at it again! They received a formal promise from the Mayor of Metropolitan Dade County (Florida), Steve Clark, to proclaim Classical Week from April 11 to 17th, 1977 . The week coincides with the Florida State Forum which will be held in Coral Gables .

These same students are circulating a petition to add "Floreat Florida" (May Florida Flourish) to the present state motto, "In God We trust ."

I am biased in favor of boys learning English; and then I would let the clever ones learn Latin as an honour, and Greek as a treat .

--Winston Churchill

SANCTUS NIKOLAS VIVIT!!

Salve, Virginia,

Amici tui parvi errant. Dubitatione aetatis dubitantis inducti sunt. Non credunt nisi vident. Credunt nihil exsistere posse quod intellegi animis parvis eorum non potest. Omnes animi, Virginia, aut virorum aut liberorum parvi sunt. In hoc magno mundo nostro, **homo** in mente est parvum insectum, mica, comparatus ad mundum circum se, conlatus ad illam mentem quae intelligere omnem veritatem et sapientiam potest.

Non credere Sancto Nikolati? Simile est dicere te faunis non credere!

Ita, Virginia, Sanctus Nikolas vivit. Immo vero vivit quam certe tam amor et benignitas et dedicatio vivunt. Gratias Deo ago Sanctum Nikolatem vivere et victurum esse per omne tempus! Mille annos, minime decem millies multiplicata annos abhinc, animum liberorum beatum facere continuabit.

(Published originally in English in the New York Sun, September 21, 1897, by Francis Pharcellus Church. Reprinted from Pompeiiana Newsletter Vol. I, No. 2 by special request.)

THE LATIN LANGUAGE

By Fr. Tom O'Mahoney

A recent column in a NATIONAL CATHOLIC weekly, February 2, 1975, by Paul H. Hallett deserves to be drawn to the attention of all. It concerns the decline in the knowledge of Latin and the effect this has had on the liturgy and the English language.

The column was prompted by a complaint sent to Pope Paul VI by the German bishops concerning the indifference to the Latin tongue especially in Catholic colleges and universities.

Few are aware that the rise or decline in Latin studies has coincided with the rise and fall of cultures. In the so-called "Dark Ages" (from the Sixth to the Ninth Centuries) Latin was at a low ebb, whereas during the Renaissance of the Fourteenth-Seventeenth Centuries, which began the modern scientific age, great interest was taken in the Latin and Greek tongues. Even the Fathers of this country were nourished on the eternal language of Rome.

"The phasing out of Latin has not coincided with a greater interest in modern languages," writes Dr. Hallett. "In recent years language study in American high schools has dropped steeply."...

Here's what Dr. Hallett says: "As Latin has slipped, so has English. It is not uncommon nowadays to find young people ready for college or in it who do not know the difference between an adverb and an adjective." This development is related to the weakening of the Latin studies. When Latin was in vigor, almost all of those in higher studies pursued it, and they exercised a preponderant influence on our culture. Reading Latin, they were constantly aware of order in the language. A Latin sentence is a phalanx, in which one is constantly aware of parts of speech and of the subordination of one to the other. Today we have such solechisms as "the media is" a singular verb clashing with a plural subject. With grammatical looseness, intelligibility is threatened... students of Latin will wholeheartedly agree that there is no language more exact and demanding in its grammar and syntax. This rigorous training inevitably influences our use of other languages, and for the better.

(Excerpts from July-August, 1976 "The Maryfaithful" submitted by Bernard Szymczak, Anoka, Minnesota.)



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