



Mexico  
(Feliz Navidad)

In Mexico the holidays begin on December sixteenth. Then the nine day posada processions start and the nativity scenes called Nacimientos, are set up in each home. The posada is a procession that shows Mary and Joseph looking for a room in the inn before Baby Jesus was born. The family carries a statue but the infant, Baby Jesus, is not placed in the manger until Christmas Eve.

On Christmas Eve there is a party with a pinata. This is a papier-mache container filled with candy and toys. It hangs from a cord. The children are blindfolded and take turns trying to break it with a stick. When it breaks the children scramble to get the goodies!

After this last posada everyone goes to church and celebrates a solemn midnight Mass.

The weather is warm at this time in Mexico. Flowers are used for decorations. The poinsettias and the Noche-Buena are in blossom. The poinsettia's pointed petals represent the Christmas Star.

The day for giving gifts does not come until January sixth. Children put out a pair of empty shoes with some straw for the Nacimiento. They pretend that Three Kings, riding camels, will leave gifts for the good children and pieces of coal for those who have misbehaved.

