



Focus on Religious Freedom
From Catholics for Freedom of Religion
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*"Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home."
- G.K. Chesterton*

Keeping Christ in Christmas at 40 State Capitol Buildings

Christmas Season, which celebrates the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, has been fast changing from a religious holy day to a secular holiday. One effort to combat this goal of a secular, indifferent and often atheist society is from the American Nativity Scene project and their mission to give away free, large nativity scenes for public display on public property with a particular aim to put nativities in front of all 50 State Capitol buildings. This Christmas, 40 State Capitols have now erected Nativity Scenes and are proof that the religious and many non-religious alike, value the true reason and joy of the season that celebrates the humble birth of the Christ Child - the King of Kings. In fact, a 2022 poll by the Washington Times "showed an overwhelming majority of 72% of the citizens agreed that religious scenes displayed on public property by private individuals should be allowed as our constitution allows." ⁽¹⁾

The Thomas More Society and the American Nativity Scene are helping groups of private citizens across the nation to display Biblical manger scenes on government property. "Many erroneously assume that government entities are prohibited from allowing a religious display," said Thomas Olp, Senior Counsel at the Thomas More Society. "The law is clear: Government entities may erect and maintain celebrations of the Christmas holiday, including nativity scenes, as long as a creche's sole purpose is not to promote its religious content, and it is placed in context with other symbols of the season ... We pray that the nativity scenes of the Christmas season will help to foster a sense of unity and peace on earth." ⁽²⁾

This year Juneau, Alaska's State Capitol, will display a Nativity scene for the first time. "The true joy of Christmas is a newborn baby lying in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes," said Andrew Klausner, coordinator of the Juneau State Capitol Nativity. ⁽³⁾ With this addition of Alaska, now 40 state capitols have nativities. The states that have, as of yet, not erected a nativity scene from the American Nativity Scene project are Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, and Virginia. ⁽⁴⁾

"Awake mankind! For your sake God has become man." St. Augustine

(americannativityscene.com, (1)(4); thomasmoresociety.org, 12/15/21(2); thomasmoresociety.org, 12/1/22(3); returntoorder.org; juneauempire.com, 12/1/22; drik.news, 12/1/22)