

*How does the poinsettia come to be the flower of Christmas?*

The poinsettia as a symbol of Christmas is a completely American development in the annals of the day. In 1836 it was brought to the United States when our first Minister to Mexico returned from there; his name was Dr. Joel R. Poinsett and the flower was named for him. As it grew in Mexico it was a wild, small, and un-imposing weed, but cultivation has produced the brilliant and flamboyant blossom we know today. Lovely legends surround the development of the flower. One such story is that a poor child who wished to give a gift to the Virgin Mary was heartbroken because she had nothing of value or beauty. As she approached the Mother of Jesus, in desperation she pulled some of the scrawny flowers at her feet, merely to make a gesture of love. As she did so, the flower was transfigured into scarlet brilliance.

