



## *The Story of the Candy Cane*

The symbol of the shepherd's crook is an ancient one, representing the humble shepherds who were the first to worship the newborn Christ. Its counterpart is our candy cane – do old as a symbol that we have nearly forgotten its humble origin.

Legend has it that in 1670, the choirmaster at the Cologne Cathedral handed our sugar sticks among his young singers to keep them quiet during the long Living Creche ceremony. In honor of the occasion, he had the candies bent into shepherds' crooks. He began with a stick of pure white, hard candy. White to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and hard to symbolize the Solid Rock, the foundation of the church and the firmness of the promises of God.

The candy-maker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the precious name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. Turned upside down it could also represent the staff of the "Good Shepherd", with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candy-maker stained it with red stripes. Three small stripes symbolize the pain inflicted upon Jesus before His death on the cross. There are three of them to represent the Holy Trinity. He added a bold stripe to represent the blood Jesus shed for mankind.