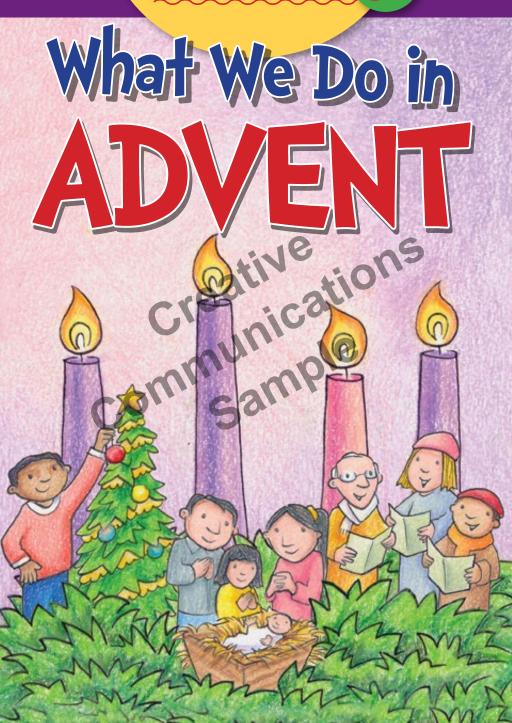
LIVING FAITH Kids



What's Advent all about?

What if you threw a birthday party and forgot the cake? Or the games and activities? That would be a pretty sad party. Whenever you want to do something fun, like throw a party or take a trip, you have to prepare. Sometimes getting ready is almost as much fun as the big event!



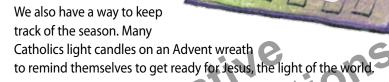
Advent is our time of getting ready for Jesus' birth. Shopping, decorating, baking and sending cards are good ways to prepare for the celebration. But when we remember that Jesus comes to save the whole world, and that he loves us more than we can imagine, we know that we need to get ready in a deeper way...in a way that Jesus will see. And do you know what? This kind of getting ready helps us find real happiness. That's what Jesus' great love for us is all about.

So let's get ready during Advent for the great big, joyful celebration of Jesus' birth. And let's have some fun too!



An Advent Action Plan

When you plan a party, you think about cake, candles and even a theme, like your favorite superhero or cartoon character. That's a lot like what we do in Advent. We have themes, candles and colors. We even have Advent heroes, like Mary, Joseph and John the Baptist!



Here are some more Advent basics:

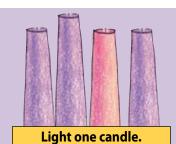
Advent is the four weeks before Christmas. It usually begins on the last Sunday of November or the first Sunday of December.

Each week of Advent we think about a theme, like hope, peace, joy and love.

Advent has colors! Look for violet or purple on the altar and in the priest's vestments. Violet stands for sorrow for sins. On the third Sunday of Advent, also called Gaudete Sunday which means "Rejoice," watch for a rose color. (It looks a little like pink.) This rose color reminds us of the joy that's coming at Christmas.

In the **first week of Advent,** we light one purple candle on the Advent wreath. We say a prayer of hope, something like this:

As we light this candle, O God, we ask you to help us get ready for the birth of your Son. Give us hope in your great love and mercy, now and forever. Amen.



Use the candle stickers.

Prepare with prayer!



Janie didn't know anyone at her new school. But when she was invited to a party and played games with her classmates, she got to know them better. Now she has lots of friends. The same thing is true with Jesus. Of course he's already our best friend, but we get to know Jesus even better when we spend time with him. And that's really good for us.

Advent is a great time to try some new ways of praying to Jesus. If you don't already, try praying with your family before meals. You can say the meal blessing here or invite everyone

to say something to God—whatever they want. Some families also say the Rosary or read Bible stories together every night. Others might gather around a candle or their family manger scene to pray. Even singing Christmas carols—by yourself or with your family—can be a way to pray to Jesus.

A Blessing Use the letter stickers to spell the words of this
Before Meals prayer of thanks. Hint: each word is a single color.
us,
O Lord, and these your,
which we are about to receive
from your
through Christ our
2018

Other New Ways to Pray

Here are some fun ways to pray during Advent:

- Ask your parents to bring you to church one day during the week (in addition to Sunday Mass) for some special time with Jesus. **Talk to Jesus**—he is there in the tabernacle in a special way, and he wants to hear all you have to say.
- Draw a picture of Mary and the angel Gabriel or of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus in the stable. Think about what is happening and ask God to help you see what it means for your life.
- Take a walk with your family and look at Christmas decorations in your neighborhood.
 As you pass each house, pray for the family that lives there.

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Breathe in the awesome smell of a Christmas tree.
 Thank God for this beautiful creation and ask him to bless your tree and your home. Pray for all the people who don't have homes this winter.

 As you bake cookies or treats, pray for those who don't have enough food. Ask God to open the hearts of all people to share with others.

Scripture Spot

Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

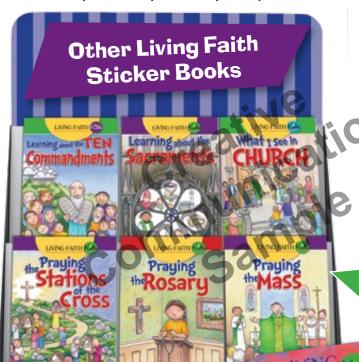
Don't forget the invitations!

It happens on TV shows all the time. People get ready for a surprise party but forget to invite the person being surprised. Or they forget invitations altogether. Everyone is embarrassed, but things always work out somehow. When Jesus was born, God himself sent out the invitations. He sent his angels to tell the shepherds about baby Jesus. And don't forget the star that led the wise men to the stable where Jesus was born.

But God doesn't just invite the shepherds and the wise men to see his Son. He invites you, too, in a very special way. At every Mass he invites you to come and receive Jesus in Holy Communion. God also invites you to see Jesus in everyone around you, especially the poor, suffering, sick, lonely and forgotten.

What We Do in ADVENT

Waiting for Christmas to arrive can take patience! But we have Advent activities like lighting candles, finding presents to give, decorating the tree and even baking treats to help us get ready. This little booklet can show you how these and other Advent activities help us to love and honor Jesus. Place colorful stickers as you read and learn. Before you know it, you'll be on your way to Christmas!



Parents & teachers...

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