

# How Do They Celebrate Christmas?



Daily Advent Traditions from Around the World

First Monday of Advent

# Argentina

... he shall be called John. *Luke 1:60*

Hi! My name is Juan, and my sister's name is Marta. We live in the country of Argentina. Our Christmas weather is warm, so we decorate our homes with wreaths of gold, red and white flowers. We put cotton balls on our Christmas trees to look like snow. The *pesebre*, or Nativity scene, is set up close to the Christmas tree and is our most important decoration. On Christmas Eve we float *globos*, colorful tissue-paper balloons lit from inside. Fireworks can be heard everywhere; after all, it's Jesus' birthday! We greet each other with *Feliz Navidad!*



*Dear Lord,  
put fireworks in my  
heart so I may show  
your light and  
happiness to others  
as I celebrate your  
birthday.*

First Tuesday of Advent

# The Czech Republic

... many will rejoice at [John's] birth, for he will be great before the Lord. *Luke 1:14-15*

Welcome to our Czech Christmas! My name is Tereza. Christians in our country try not to drink milk or eat meat or eggs during Advent. It is a time to be serious and to confess our sins, time to make our hearts ready for Jesus. On Christmas we have a tradition of putting fish scales under our dinner plates to bring us luck. (I think they bring us a smelly dinner!) My grandparents remember when our government tried to outlaw Christmas and replace Baby Jesus with Grandfather Frost. It didn't work! Now we are able to worship Jesus in our churches again.



*Dear Jesus, when I've teased my sibling, demanded my way or gossiped about my friend, I can tell you about it and know your forgiveness. Help me stop doing those selfish things.*

## First Wednesday of Advent

# China

You will ... give light to those who sit in darkness  
and in the shadow of death. *Luke 1:76, 79*

*Ye Dan Kuai Le!* In our language that means “Jesus birth happy;” our way to say Merry Christmas. Our names are Ji, Jin, Lei and Lien and we are four friends who live in the country of China. Because not many of our people know about Jesus, Christmas is not a public holiday here, but that hasn’t stopped us from filling the churches to overflowing on Christmas Eve. We have “trees of light” decorated with paper chains, paper flowers, and paper lanterns. We love Jesus and pray that more people will join us.

*Dear God, I pray that everyone in the world will be free to celebrate our Savior’s birth. Thank you for my freedom to sing carols at the top of my lungs!*



## First Thursday of Advent

# Greece

I will sprinkle clean water on you,  
and you shall be clean. *Ezekiel 36:25*

I'm Georgias! I'm Eleni! We live next door to each other in the country of Greece. We greet the baby Jesus like you do with lots of Greek traditions mixed in. Some people wrap a sprig of basil around a wooden cross, dip it in water and sprinkle it around the house to drive out evil spirits. We would rather ask Jesus to bless our home during Advent and Christmas and every day! We enjoy spicy golden *christopsomos*—Christ bread—made into big sweet loaves with crispy crusts. We greet each other by saying, *Kala Hristouyienna*. Merry Christmas!



*O Lord, sprinkling water reminds me of my baptism. Thank you for making me your child, for forgiving me and for watching over me every day.*

# How Do They Celebrate Christmas?

How will you celebrate Jesus' birthday this year? Advent wreaths and calendars? A Christmas tree? Presents? Christmas carols? Family dinners? Relatives in town? Church services? Christmas programs?



Children all over the world celebrate in many of the same ways we do, but each country has its own special traditions and customs. Let's meet some new friends in these devotions, and say "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Birthday, Jesus," in their languages. Learn their names and imagine you are celebrating with them. Find a world map and put a star on each country as you read about it. Pray each day that people all over the world will know the joy of Jesus.