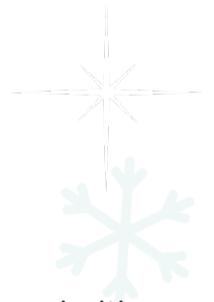


Family Advent & Christmas Calendar

Welcoming Jesus into Our Hearts and Homes



Each year, amid the busyness of our Christmas preparations, the Advent season offers an opportunity to open our hearts and homes to the presence of God—a time for families to reflect on how to better prepare to welcome Jesus more intentionally at Christmas.

The Christmas story is the love story between God and humanity, in which God pours Himself out in love by taking on a human nature—by becoming a little baby! Like Mary and Joseph, we prepare for Jesus by practicing this type of self-giving love in our family and in our community. We respect and cherish each other; we serve each other even when it is difficult or inconvenient, and we strive to lead each other closer to God.

Setting aside time for family prayer strengthens family love and allows us to listen to God's voice as He invites us to a closer

relationship with Himself. When we prioritize God and faith first, we will find our Christmas celebrations filled with His light, joy, and peace!

To help your journey through the Advent and Christmas seasons and embrace the wonderful gift of prayer, we have created a calendar with short, simple activities for the whole family to do together. There are moments of prayer, suggestions for family conversations and service, and opportunities for creativity and fun.

Family Rosary is here to support your family as you journey together in prayer during the Advent and Christmas seasons. May God continue to bless you and your family.



Family Rosary

HOLY CROSS
FAMILY MINISTRIES



Please note: We suggest preparing your family Advent wreath before the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, so that you are ready to light it when Advent begins. You can find instructions and tips for making your own Advent wreath at FamilyRosary.org.

Sunday,
December 1
First Sunday of Advent

If you haven't already, create an **Advent wreath** with your family. It can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. Light the first purple candle each day this week (perhaps at dinner.) Pray an "Our Father," "Hail Mary," and/or "Grace" together.

Monday,
December 2

Ask each family member to choose a fruit of the Holy Spirit—such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, or gentleness—to practice more intentionally during Advent.

Tuesday,
December 3

Think of some ways you can incorporate prayer into your Advent season, such as grace before meals, weekly Rosary, sharing the Daily Readings, or nightly prayer before the Nativity scene (creche).

Wednesday,
December 4

Say a "**Hail Mary**," a decade, or an entire Rosary for someone on your heart or who needs God's help today.

Thursday,
December 5

Ask each member of your family to write individual "thank you notes" to each person in the family. Then, share the notes with each other during dinner or before bed.

Friday,
December 6
Feast of Saint Nicholas

In celebration of the Feast of Saint Nicholas purchase or make a gift that you can donate to a children's charity or give your gift directly to someone in need.

Saturday,
December 7

Take turns sharing your favorite Christmas memories. If you have time, look through old family photos or videos.

NOTE: in PDF versions you can click **Underlined Text** in the activities



The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus... Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

—Luke 1:30-31; 38a

**Sunday,
December 8***Second Sunday of Advent
and Solemnity of the
Immaculate Conception*

Today, light two purple candles on your Advent wreath. Today is also the **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**. If you are not familiar with this special day, use **this link** to learn more.

**Monday,
December 9***Feast of Saint Juan Diego*

Draw or color a picture of the Blessed Mother as she appeared to Saint Juan Diego. You may also enjoy reading an account of Saint Juan Diego's encounter with Our Lady in 1531.

**Tuesday,
December 10***Feast of Our Lady of
Guadalupe*

Resolve to start each day with a short prayer — either alone or as a family.

**Wednesday,
December 11**

Do something kind for a neighbor or friend.

**Thursday,
December 12**

Offer to help someone in your family with a chore today. Offer it up as a form of prayer.

**Friday,
December 13***Memorial of Saint Lucy*

Take a walk or drive around with your family to enjoy the Christmas lights and decorations.

**Saturday,
December 14**

Say a "Hail Mary" and ask our Blessed Mother to guide the Church today.

...an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins..." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife.



—Matthew 1:20b-21; 24

Sunday,
December 15
Third Sunday of Advent

After you light two purple candles and one rose candle on your Advent wreath, pray a decade of the Rosary with your family, meditating on the Joyful Mystery of the Annunciation. Visit FamilyRosary.org for many Rosary prayer resources.

Monday,
December 16

Light a candle (in the evening if possible) and ask one member of the family to read the story of the Annunciation (**Luke 1:26-38**) with your family.

Tuesday,
December 17

Begin praying the "**O Antiphons**" continue each day until Christmas Eve. One idea is to read one aloud each day after family dinner or evening before bed.

Wednesday,
December 18

Say a prayer together asking Mary to help you prepare to welcome Jesus, her Son, into your hearts and homes.

Thursday,
December 19

Christmas is almost here! In preparation find out when Confession is offered at your parish and go as a family. (With children too young to receive the Sacrament, take a moment to talk about the importance of forgiving and asking for forgiveness.) Many good examinations of conscience are available online to help you prepare for Confession, some of which are geared to different ages and vocations.

Friday,
December 20

Listen to all verses of "**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**," feel free to sing along.

Saturday,
December 21

Make a card for any priests, deacons, or religious at your parish, wishing them a Merry Christmas and thanking them for their "yes" to God's calling and all they do for your church.

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him.



—Mark 1:17-18

CHRISTMAS SEASON



**Welcoming Jesus into
Our Hearts and Homes**

Sunday, December 22
Fourth Sunday of Advent

After you light all four candles of your Advent wreath, share something you are most looking forward to this Christmas (aside from gifts).

CHRISTMAS SEASON

DECEMBER 23 - 29

**Monday,
December 23**



At a meal with your family, share examples of how you saw Christ present throughout your day. Discuss how you can be more attentive to Him as you get ready for Christmas.

**Tuesday,
December 24**
Vigil of Christmas

Today is the Vigil of Christmas, also known as Christmas Eve! Read the Bible story of Jesus' birth, **Luke 2:1-20**. Then share what Jesus' birth means to each of you.

**Wednesday,
December 25**
Christmas Day

Merry Christmas! Take five quiet minutes to pray to Jesus, thanking Him for coming to redeem us. Attend Mass as a family; be sure to invite any visiting family to join you.

**Thursday,
December 26**
Feast of Saint Stephen

Saint Stephen was one of the Church's first deacons (ordained with the specific call to humbly serve those in need). Today, offer a Corporal or Spiritual Work of Mercy.

**Friday,
December 27**
*Feast of Saint John, Apostle
& Evangelist*

"God is Love" (1 John 4:16). Share some (of the many) ways we experience God as love.

**Saturday,
December 28**
Feast of the Holy Innocents

Purchase diapers, formula, or clothing to donate to a crisis pregnancy center.

**Sunday,
December 29**

Prepare a meal as a family! Take the time to bond and think of God's presence in your family.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

—John 6:51

DECEMBER 30 - JANUARY 9

Monday, December 30*Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas*

It is still the Christmas Octave! Sing Christmas carols with your family today.

Tuesday, December 31*Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*

Take time today to share something you appreciate about each member of your family. Afterwards, take some time to pray for each other either together or on your own.

Wednesday, January 1*Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God*

Say a prayer to Mary with your family, thanking her for saying “yes” to being the Mother of God and asking her to help you to love her Son.

Thursday, January 2

Discuss as a family, one thing you can each do this year to learn more about the Catholic Faith.

Friday, January 3*Holy Name of Jesus*Read **Matthew 1:18-25**. Did you know that Emmanuel, a name for Jesus, means “God is with us”? Does your name have a special meaning? Are you named after someone special? Discuss the origins of the names of your family members.**Saturday, January 4***Feast of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton*

Pray for teachers, catechists, and parents today.

Sunday, January 5

Visit someone who might be alone, lonely, or would just love to hear from you. If you can't visit, give them a call (or Zoom)—have each family member take a minute to say hello!

Monday, January 6*Feast of Saint André Bessette*Hold the door open for someone today. Read more about **Saint André Bessette**.**Tuesday, January 7***Epiphany**

Like the Magi, give Jesus a gift today! The best gift we can give Him is our love, so spend five minutes talking to Jesus and telling Him that you love Him.

Wednesday, January 8*The Baptism of the Lord*

Today is the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord! Pray a decade of the Rosary and meditate on this Luminous mystery.

Thursday, January 9Discuss with your family how you can continue to say “yes” to God like Mary even when the Christmas season is over. Father Peyton novena starts today, the anniversary of his birth. BONUS: Join Holy Cross Family Ministries in praying a **Novena to Venerable Patrick Peyton**.** Epiphany may be celebrated on January 6 in some dioceses around the world.*