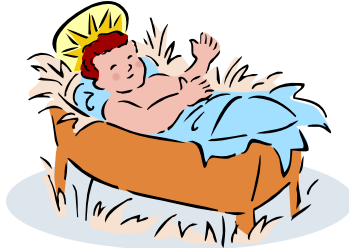




## Preparing for Christ's Birth

Jesus is with us every day and in every way. During Advent, we set time aside to prepare our minds, hearts and homes to anticipate (watch, plan and wait for) his coming. We look for specific ways to get ready to welcome the gift of the Christ Child's love into our homes and world. Prayer, activities, family discussion, reaching out to others – there are numerous ways to open ourselves to Christ's love and to share his love with others.



- ❖ Advent wreath – An advent wreath helps us to mark the passage of time in a prayerful way as we prepare for the Christ Child to be born anew in our hearts and homes.
- ❖ Family Discussions & Family Christmas traditions – whenever families share special moments, we focus on the true meaning of Christmas.
- ❖ Christmas Cards – If kept in a basket, a card can be pulled each night and a prayer said for the particular “gift” that person brings to your life.
- ❖ Service to Others – Jesus brings love and hope into our life. By doing something good for others, we share Christ's gift of love.

**Think It Through** If you had been able to visit the Christ child when he was young, what gift would you have given him? \_\_\_\_\_

Mother Teresa found Christ in every person. Is someone you know Christ-like? Who is that person and how are they Christ-like? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some of the signs of Christmas and how can we find God in those signs? (For example, Christmas lights are a sign of Christ who brings light to the world, etc.)  
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**Act** Kindness is a reflection of Christ's love. Who do you know that needs someone to be kind to them? And in what way can you extend that kindness? \_\_\_\_\_

**Scripture** “. . . they shall call him Emmanuel which means “God is with us . . .”  
Matt 1:22-23

**Resources** Book: *Advent, Christmas and Epiphany in the Domestic Church* by Catherine and Peter Fournier (Ignatius Press)

Magazine: *Take Out – Family Faith on the Go* (December 2006) by Our Sunday Visitor

Website: <http://www.cptryon.org/prayer/child/adv.html>