



## Celebrating Advent and Christmas

### Engage: Page 79

- ▶ Discuss customs or traditions that help families and communities prepare for Christmas.
- ▶ Read aloud and discuss the text in the box on page 79. Then read aloud the page.  
**Ask:** *How can we remember the reasons why we are celebrating Advent and Christmas?* (Possible answers: We can pray special prayers. We can notice God at work in friends and family. We can attend Mass regularly.)
- ▶ Pray the prayer together. Pray aloud the Sign of the Cross.

### Explore: Pages 80–81

- ▶ Invite your child to participate in a demonstration. Ask him or her to walk to the door while blindfolded. For safety, be sure to clear away any obstacles. **Ask:** *What was it like to walk around in darkness?* **Say:** *We're going to read about Advent and its relation to darkness and light.*
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the article title Living in the Light of Advent on page 80. Take turns reading aloud the page. **Ask:** *In Scripture, what does darkness represent?* (evil, sin, not following God, turning away from God) *What does light represent?* (goodness, Jesus Christ, Salvation, following God the Father and Jesus Christ) Read aloud these passages and discuss the meanings of light and darkness: John 8:12, 1 Timothy 6:11–16, 2 Samuel 22:29, Job 12:22.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud Our Catholic Character. Point out that the Catholic Church is worldwide and honors the same saints. Invite your child to read aloud the definition of the *Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe* in the Glossary. Point out that the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is important for all Catholics, and because it reflects cultural tradition for Mexican Catholics, it is especially important to them.
- ▶ Read aloud the sections Awake from Sleep and In History, Grace, and Glory on page 81. **Ask:** *What are some ways that you can be "awake" in your daily life?* (Possible answers: You can pray before meals and bed; you can notice goodness in others; you can pause to give thanks for blessings throughout the day.) *Who will experience Jesus' final coming?* (everyone) Read aloud the section Your Advent. Talk about what your family can do to personalize the Advent experience.
- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the directions and write responses for the Awake or Asleep? activity on page 81.
- ▶ Close the article discussion by asking your child to name some things or events for which he or she anxiously awaits. **Ask:** *What do you do while you wait? What might cause your hope to waver as you wait? What do you do to keep your hope alive?* (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.



### Explore: Pages 82–83

- ▶ Ask your child to choose a favorite baby picture. Share the story of his or her birth. Point out that just as this story was retold and passed along, the Christian community retold and passed along the story of Jesus' birth.
- ▶ Take turns reading aloud the article The Gift of Christmas on page 82. Review the meaning of *Nativity* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *Which two Gospel writers tell us about Jesus' birth? (Matthew and Luke) What is unique about Luke's account?* (He stresses a different kind of king and kingdom. He points out that Jesus came to save everyone, including those who are poor and outcast. He highlights Mary's role in Salvation History.)
- ▶ Together read aloud the Sacred Art feature. Discuss the questions, guiding your child to recognize the difficult journey to Bethlehem for Mary and Joseph.
- ▶ Read aloud the section First Gifts on page 83. Ask your child to read aloud the meaning of *sanctuary* in the Glossary. **Ask:** *How is God's power unlike any other power?* (Possible answers: God's power is in service to others, not in service to self.)
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the section One True Gift. Discuss the meanings of the sayings "Jesus is the reason for the season" and "Put Christ back in Christmas."
- ▶ Read aloud Past Meets Present. Explain that Roman paganism represented a variety of religions whose followers believed in many gods. In the early days of Christianity, Christians made up only about 10 percent of the population and were routinely persecuted for their beliefs.
- ▶ Together write ideas for a new Christmas tradition that will help your family stay focused on Jesus.
- ▶ Use the Study Corner as a quick review of the article.

### Reflect: Pages 84–85

- ▶ Read aloud the title Welcome Jesus! on page 84. Take turns reading aloud the paragraphs in the left column. Read aloud the definitions of *Holy Days of Obligation* and *feast days* in the Glossary. Explain that there are six Holy Days of Obligation, and refer your child to page 291 for more information about these days.
- ▶ Take turns praying aloud the parts of Give Glory to the Lord. Pause for meditation following each part. Conclude the prayer by praying the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Look at page 85. Read aloud the introductory text of Where Do I Fit In? **Say:** *In times of darkness, the light we offer others shines more brightly.* Read aloud Being a Light to Others. Discuss areas in your lives where you feel you need to be perfect. **Ask:** *How can such an attitude keep us from doing God's work?* (Possible answer: It prevents us from saying anything at all.) **Say:** *We do not have to be the flashlight. We just have to be the mirror, angled toward God. Remembering this can relieve some of the pressure we feel.*
- ▶ Read aloud the directions and complete the Lighting a Way activity together.

### Respond: Page 86

- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the directions and each main idea in What's What? Ask him or her to complete the activity and share the responses.
- ▶ Review the terms you learned in this session in Say What?
- ▶ Read aloud Now What? Together list ideas that you both can refer to during the week as a reminder to recognize the dignity of others.
- ▶ Invite your child to access a 3-Minute Retreat at [www.loyolapress.com/retreat](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat).