

## Celebrating Advent

### Engage: Page 79

- ▶ Invite your child to quiet himself or herself and prepare to hear Sacred Scripture. Read aloud Matthew 1:18–25. Then say: ***The Gospel of the Lord.*** Invite your child to respond, *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*
- ▶ Invite your child to describe something that he or she is looking forward to with excitement. Ask what he or she is doing to prepare. Say: ***When Joseph learned Mary was pregnant, he began making preparations. During Advent, we prepare to celebrate Jesus' coming at Christmas.*** Invite your child to read aloud the paragraphs on page 79. Ask: ***How do we prepare a loving home in our hearts for Jesus?*** (Accept reasonable answers.)
- ▶ Say: ***Let's pray together to ask Jesus to be with us during Advent.*** Pray aloud the prayer while your child prays along silently. Conclude by praying *Amen.*

### Explore: Page 80

- ▶ Talk about how your church changes during Advent. Ask your child what songs are sung and what colors are used in decorations and the priest's vestments.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud We Prepare During Advent. Say: ***During Advent, we are called to take time to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus. We can always ask for God's help as we do this.***
- ▶ Read aloud Four Weeks to Prepare and give your child time to complete the activity. Discuss the ideas that he or she wrote.
- ▶ Read aloud God's Gift of Eternal Life. Emphasize that the letter your child will write is personal and that you will not ask him or her to share it with you. Give your child time to complete his or her letter.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. Say: ***God is always guiding our steps and watching out for us. During these four weeks of Advent, we can rest easy knowing that God is right beside us.***

### Reflect: Page 81

- ▶ Invite your child to name a favorite activity or event that helps your family prepare for Advent, such as attending a Nativity play. If he or she cannot think of one, brainstorm a list of ideas together.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud Mass During Advent. Say: ***John the Baptist called people to prepare themselves for the Messiah. We are called to do the same.***

- ▶ Read aloud *What We Experience*. Discuss the connection between the sacraments and Advent. Emphasize that God is present in the sacraments and that celebrating them helps us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- ▶ Read aloud the *Did You Know?* feature. Explain that Gaudete Sunday is the third Sunday in Advent and is still celebrated today. Point out that *Gaudete* is a word from the Latin Mass that means “rejoice.”

### Art Print: Page 82

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture that shows a family walking in the snow to attend Christmas Eve Mass.
- ▶ Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the weather conditions and the time of day.
- ▶ Say: ***There are many ways we prepare our hearts during Advent in order to grow closer to God.*** Invite your child to turn to page 82. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud *Celebrating Advent*. Ask: ***What gifts does the Church give us to perfect our relationship with God?*** (the sacraments) ***How do Baptism, Reconciliation, and the Eucharist prepare us for Jesus?*** (Baptism makes us part of God’s family; Reconciliation repairs our relationship with God; the Eucharist reminds us that Jesus died for our sins.)
- ▶ Read aloud the activity directions and give your child time to complete the activity. Discuss his or her idea for a new Advent tradition to introduce to your family.
- ▶ Show your child a selection of sacramental symbols, such as a cross, chalice, or dove. Give your child a bar of soap and a plastic knife or toothpick and ask him or her to carve a design into the soap. Invite your child to share what each symbol represents in his or her carving.

### Respond: Pages 83–84

- ▶ Invite your child to read aloud the Faith Summary on page 83. Review the Word I Learned in this session. Read aloud *Ways of Being Like Jesus* and encourage your child to think about what he or she might say to someone else in your family.
- ▶ Read aloud *Signs of Advent* and give your child time to complete the activity. Discuss his or her answers.
- ▶ Pray aloud the prayer as your child prays along silently. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ As a family, read and discuss *With My Family* on page 84, then complete the activity. Pray aloud the prayer together.