Family Faith

Liturgical Year: Advent

In Advent, we prepare the way of the Lord.

Chapter Summary

The Church commemorates the Incarnation of Jesus with the feasts of the Annunciation and Epiphany and, most notably, at Christmas. During the liturgical season of Advent, the Church and its members prepare to celebrate Jesus' Incarnation at Christmas. We also prepare for when Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. At Mass, we hear the words of Saint John the Baptist, who was the final prophet to prepare the way for the Messiah. He called people to repent from sin to prepare themselves for Jesus. The Advent traditions of the Advent calendar and *Las Posadas* help us prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming.

Living Advent Differently

It seems as though our world has Advent and Christmas reversed. During Advent, people celebrate Christmas, but when the Christmas season actually arrives, no one is celebrating. We know that the four weeks of Advent are meant to be a time of *preparation* for Christmas. It is the time in which we focus more on turning away from sin.

To properly prepare for Christmas, we must resist getting caught up in the hustle and bustle around us. As parents, we have the authority to preserve our homes as places of prayer and preparation during Advent. Here are some ideas for how your family can celebrate Advent:

- Recite special prayers together as a family.
- Light the Advent wreath candles for each week of Advent.
- Participate in *Las Posadas*.
- Wait to listen to Christmas carols until Christmas Eve.
- Make a family Advent calendar to mark each day of Advent. See the parent portal for ideas.

Preparing for Advent doesn't mean we shun the world. Family gatherings and shopping for presents are still good things to do. Sadly, stress and unhealthy expectations can make holiday activities burdens. Rather than seeing these activities as stressful burdens, we can turn them into acts of love for our family and friends.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.