

Preparation for Christmas

Family Activities

Place a large candle on the table as a centerpiece.

A tradition of the Slavic people is to use a loaf of bread as its candle holder and have it blessed at the Church.

The candle is a symbolic reminder of Christ, the Light of the World

A Family Christmas Eve Prayer

- Think about Jesus' parents who must have been tired after their long journey and no comfortable place to stay.
- Think of them full of joy as they held their baby boy in their arms.
- Pray together
Thank you Lord, for sending us your Son, Jesus, who gives us light and hope. Guide our family to be a reflection of the holy family in all that we do and say each and every day. Amen.

Jesus in the Manger

- Place baby Jesus in the manger of your nativity scene.
- Using the figures, tell the story of Jesus' birth to your children.
- Talk about what it must have been like for Mary and Joseph to have their baby in a barn without clean sheets, lights, running water or heat.
- What do you think they said to each other after Jesus was born?
- Pray together
Thank you Lord, for sending us your Son, Jesus, who gives us light and hope.
Guide our family to be a reflection of the holy family in all that we do and say each and every day. Amen.

Jesus, Light of the World

- Add sand to the bottom of a clay flowerpot and then place a votive candle in the middle (or a battery operated tea light for safety).
- Place the pot on the front porch or by the front door to light the way for baby Jesus.
- Pray together
Thank you Lord, for sending us your Son, Jesus, who gives us light and hope.
Guide our family to be a reflection of the holy family in all that we do and say each and every day. Amen.



Family Blessings for the Advent / Christmas Season



Family Advent Wreath Lighting

- Have four candles and light one candle each week in Advent. Some families have this ritual for Sunday dinner and then light the candle each meal.
- Begin with a prayer:
Come, Lord Jesus, be light for our darkness. Send us your Spirit so that we might faithfully spread your love into all places of people's lives. Amen
- Light the candle
- Read from Scripture eg from Sunday Mass or Psalm 42:2-3; Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Matthew 3:1-12 or Romans 8:19,22-25

Family Blessing of the Crib

- At the beginning of Advent, on Christmas Eve or anywhere in between
- Begin with the Sign of the Cross
- Leader: God, open our hearts to your Word as we gather to bless our manger scene, a reminder that you sent your Son Jesus as our Saviour.
- Scripture: Psalm 130:5-8 or Luke 1:46-55,2:1-7 or Mark 13:33-37
- Leader: Let us raise our hands in blessing over this remembrance of Jesus' birth.
Lord, our God, with the birth of your Son your glory breaks on the world. Through the night hours, we your people watch for the coming of your promised Son. As we wait, give us a taste of the joy that you will grant us when the fullness of his glory has filled the earth. Amen



Family Christmas Tree Blessing

- Begin by standing around the tree and raising a hand in blessing
- God of All Creation, bless this Christmas tree and us who gather round.
Its beauty awakens in us a heart full of gratitude and hope of what is to come. God who so loved the world, we wait for your Son, Jesus, the shoot sprung from the tree of Jesse to come to birth in us. God of trees and stars, help us to love one another and all on earth. Amen



Christmas Morning Family Prayer

- At the beginning of the day: Gather family around tree or manger scene.
- Light the Christmas Candle.
- O God, we light this candle and keep it burning throughout the day as a symbol of how your love lights the world. May it be a reminder to us to reflect your love in all we do. Amen
- At the end of the day: Invite each person to think of one thing they are grateful for today.
- Dear Jesus. We thank you for this celebration of your birth.
We thank you for.....(each person says what they are grateful for today..)
As we put out the Christmas candle keep us ever mindful that your love never goes out.
With your help may we grow each day as your faithful disciples. Amen.
- Blow out the candle



Family and Parish-Based Catechesis Office
Archdiocese of Adelaide