



# Welcoming **JESUS**

STICKERS AND STORIES FOR ADVENT



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# Welcoming JESUS

Happy New Year!

When does a new year begin? There are many right answers! In America, the country begins a new year on January 1. When we go to school, our new year begins when summer ends. Your birthday begins a new year just for you! But for the Church, the new year begins on the First Sunday of Advent.



## What is Advent?

The word *Advent* means “someone comes to us.” Who comes to us? Jesus! People waited for hundreds of years saying someone like Jesus would be born. More than two thousand years ago, Jesus was born to us. Jesus began God’s new world, and promised he would come again.

## Welcoming Jesus:

### How to Get Started

We’ve divided this booklet into three parts. The first part is filled with stories about those who waited for Jesus. The second part holds stories about those who welcomed Jesus’ birth. The third part contains stories of the new world that Jesus brings, now and when he comes again.

Read your booklet each day and find the right sticker to help decorate your card with

stories about Jesus from long ago and in our lives today.





## **PART ONE:** **God's People**

**G**od's people get ready to welcome Jesus!  
You and your family can use this prayer for  
the first eight days of December:

**Come to us quickly, O God, who...**

- ...walked with Adam and Eve
- ...gave a family to Abraham and Sarah
- ...came close to Jacob
- ...taught us through Moses
- ...freed Miriam and her people from slavery
- ...brought us to a land of fruit
- ...makes us want to sing songs of joy
- ...promises a world of peace. Amen!



Day  
1

The man called his wife Eve...  
mother of all the living.

—Genesis 3:20

**O**ur story begins in a garden, where our mother Eve and our father Adam walked in peace with God. Then they chose to do the one thing God had said not to do: they ate from the wrong tree. They left the garden but still loved God and one another. God promised: someday a child would be born to bring them back to God.



**Just for Today...**


Can you think of one mistake of yours that you could make better this week?



Day  
2

Count the stars...  
just so...shall your descendants be.

–Genesis 15:5



**G**od does not stop loving people just because they make mistakes. God planned all along for God's people to be as many as the stars in the sky. God chose Abraham and Sarah as the father and mother of the people that God would teach the right way to live. Jesus, too, was a member of the family of Abraham and Sarah.

**Just for Today...**

Ask a friend or family member: What do you think God wants us to do, most of all?

Day  
3

A stairway rested on the ground,  
with its top reaching to the heavens.

—Genesis 28:12

Again and again God chose men and women to learn about God and God's ways. God chose Jacob, who dreamed in the desert of a ladder reaching all the way to



heaven. Many years later Jesus told a friend that he was just like that ladder, reaching from earth to heaven. Jesus brings us that close to God.

**Just for Today...**

Take a step on that ladder! Pray to Jesus—just say what you want to say—and know that you, too, are close to God.

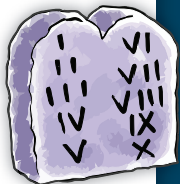




**Moses went up  
the mountain to God.**

–Genesis 19:3

**G**od didn't leave people to guess about how to live. On a mountain God taught Moses how to teach God's people. Moses taught that they needed to trust in God, be fair to one another and take care of the poor. When Jesus came he did just what Moses taught. He trusted in God. He taught us how to be fair to one another. He always took care of the poor and the sick.



**Just for Today...**

Think of one way you could live as Moses taught us. Can you be fair to a friend or family member?

Day  
5

**Miriam took a tambourine  
in her hand.**

*–Exodus 15:20*

**G**od helped the people in many ways. When they lived as slaves, God helped them run away to safety. He stopped the slaveowners from following them. Their prophet Miriam sang and danced for joy when she saw they were free.

Jesus said that was why he had come, too, to set the prisoners free.

**Just for Today...**

Remember Miriam dancing for joy because she and all God's people were free. What has God done for you and those you love that makes you joyful?

It was then the season  
for early grapes.

—Numbers 13:20

**G**od did not leave the people alone in the wilderness. God helped Joshua bring the people to a land filled with grapes and figs and other good things to eat.



Jesus said that he would bring us to a new world, too, where people lived just the way God wanted. In this new world, no one would ever need to cry again.

### Just for Today...

Draw a picture of a new land. Imagine Jesus could make the world just the way God wants it. What would that look like?

Day  
7

Sing to God a new song.

—Psalm 33:3

**G**od wanted people to live good lives in the good land. One man who pleased God was King David. The people told stories about King David. He was brave, even when he was a young boy fighting off

lions and taking care of sheep. He took up a harp and sung to God.

He loved God and God's people. When Jesus came, people called him David's Son, the King who would love God and God's people forever.

**Just for Today...**

Make up a song for God. You can share it or save it just for God.

There shall be no harm or  
ruin on all my holy mountain.

—Isaiah 11:9

**G**od told the people that there would be an even better land than the one they knew. When all the world was made new, even the lion and lamb would be able to lie down next to each other. Jesus came to begin this new world for God. In Advent, we remember how he came and we pray for him to come again.



### Just for Today...

Think of the one thing in this world that you want God to make brand new. Tell God what you want, and listen to what God might say to you.



## **PART TWO:**

### **Jesus' Birth**

**J**oseph and Mary welcome Jesus to our world! You and your family can use this prayer for days 9-16 of December:

**Come to us quickly, O God, who...**

- ...sent an angel to Mary
- ...rejoiced with mother Elizabeth
- ...called Joseph to protect Jesus
- ...gave us Jesus, God's Son
- ...told good news to shepherds
- ...sent for kings from far away
- ...revealed the light of Jesus
- ...asks us to listen to Jesus. Amen!

## The virgin's name as Mary.

—Luke 1:27

**G**od's plan took a new turn with Mary. God sent an angel to tell her: Good news! You will give birth to God's own Son, a baby boy. You will name him Jesus, which means "God saves," because Jesus is going to save God's people. Mary said, "I am God's servant. Whatever God wants, I say, yes!"



### Just for Today...

Make a *Good News!* newspaper. Draw or write about the good news in your family. Be sure to add the good news of Jesus' birth.

Day  
10

**Elizabeth...gave birth to a son.**

—Luke 1:57



**G**od had plans for many families in Israel. Not only would Mary give birth to God's Son, but her older cousin Elizabeth would have a baby, too. Elizabeth was old enough to be a grandma, but had never had a baby. Now she was filled with joy because God gave her a baby boy named John. Elizabeth and Mary sang together: Blessed are they who believed!

**Just for Today...**

Call up a grandmother. Ask her to tell you about when your mom or dad was born.



Day  
II

Joseph, too, went...  
to the city...called Bethlehem.

—Luke 2:4

**G**od needed Joseph to help God's people, too. God sent an angel to Joseph asking him to take care of Mary and her child. Joseph helped Mary when the ruler ordered all families to travel long distances to be counted. Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem. Perhaps a donkey carried their clothes and food? It was a long, hard journey for Mary, because it was almost time for Jesus to be born. Joseph took care of her every step of the way.



**Just for Today...**

Look for someone who needs a helping hand. Be like Joseph!

Day  
12

She laid him in a manger.

—Luke 2:7

**F**ar from their home, Joseph and Mary could find no place to stay. In those days, an inn might be an extra room in a home or just a place by the side of the road where there was a fire to keep people warm. But there wasn't any room even in those simple inns.



Instead Mary and Joseph went to a stable where the animals lived. When Jesus was born, his first bed was a manger, a cow's feeding dish!

**Just for Today...**

Make a Christmas card for a family member who lives far away. Ask a parent to help you mail it.

The shepherds...found the infant,  
lying in the manger.

—Luke 2:16

In Jesus' day, shepherds lived far from town. They were poor. They couldn't go to the religious services that others did. The teachers of God's people didn't trust them very much. But when Jesus was born, God didn't send angels to those teachers or to the kings or to the soldiers of the land. God sent angels to the shepherds. "Good news!" the angels sang. "God has sent you a savior!"



### Just for Today...

Find warm mittens and gloves you can give to today's poor. Ask a family member to help. Can you find any made of wool, from sheep?

Day  
14

**They were overjoyed  
at seeing the star.**

*—Matthew 2:10*

**K**ings came to see baby Jesus, too—but not kings from nearby. These kings came from far, far away. They did not know the land of Jesus. Instead they followed a bright and shining star to find Jesus and Mary and Joseph. They knelt before him and gave him gifts of gold and sweet-smelling spices.



**Just for Today...**

What gift can you bring to Jesus? Can you sing him a song or draw him a picture?

Day  
15

**My eyes have seen your...light.**

*—Luke 2:30, 32*

**S**imeon and Anna were two older people who were waiting to see God's plan for themselves. When baby Jesus came near them, they knew the time had come! Anna told everyone listening about Jesus and God's plan. Simeon took him in his arms and said, "God, you have shown me the light of Israel."



**Just for Today...**

Ask your family to light candles at dinner to remember Jesus our light.

Day  
16

Did you not know that  
I must be in my Father's house?

—Luke 2:49



**J**esus was eager to help God's plan, even when he was a boy. When he was 12 years old, he went to the great temple in Jerusalem with his mother and father. But when Mary and Joseph started for home, they found he had stayed behind! They ran back and found him, safe and sound, in the Temple learning from the teachers, and teaching them himself.

**Just for Today...**

Do what they do in Malta, where a child is chosen to tell the story of Jesus' birth to all the grownups! Tell your family Jesus' story.



**PART THREE:**  
**Jesus in Our World**

We welcome Jesus to our lives! You and your family can use this prayer for days 17-24 of December:

**Come to us quickly, O God, who...**

...called Jesus “beloved Son”

...gave bread to your people

...loves the children

...healed the sick

...forgives without end

...gave Jesus new life

...dwells in the tree of life

...brings us close to Jesus. Amen!

Day  
17

Coming up out of the water,  
he saw the heavens...open.

—Mark 1:10

**A**s Jesus became a man, he knew the time had come to begin living in a new way in God's world. He went to his cousin John and asked to be baptized. John dunked him in the river and they both prayed. Jesus saw the Spirit like a dove and heard God's voice: "You are my dearly loved Son!"



**Just for Today...**

Ask a parent to tell you the story of the day you were baptized.



The bread of God gives  
life to the world.

—John 6:33

Jesus came to feed God's people. Once he was teaching 5,000 people. "We're hungry," the people said. Jesus took five loaves of bread. He gave thanks to God for the bread. He broke it. He shared it with everyone. All 5,000 people ate, and all said, "It is enough," pass a piece of bread



### Just for Today...

Gather your family around the dinner table. Ask each family member to hold it, thank God for it, break off a piece and pass it to the next person.

Day  
19



Jesus called the children  
to himself.

—Luke 18:16

Jesus came to teach God's people. Once he was teaching his friends about how to live the way God wants. Jesus called a child to sit in his lap. Jesus said, "This child doesn't own anything. This child can't boss people around. That's how God wants us to live!"

**Just for Today...**

Imagine Jesus calling you to come to him.  
What do you do? What do you say?

**He took the child by the hand.**

—Mark 5:41

**J**esus came to heal God's people. He helped them live with their friends and families, doing what they all loved to do. Once a man told him, "It's my little girl who's sick." Jesus went to the man's house right away. "Little girl," he said, "Up out of bed!" The girl got up, all well! Her family was filled with joy.



### **Just for Today...**

Do what Jesus asked us to do for the sick: pray for them and be with them. We can't make them all better, but we can love them as Jesus wants.



Day  
1

He loved them to the end.

—John 13:1



**I**t wasn't always easy for Jesus to make God's new world. Some times people were angry that he wanted them to change their ways. One sad day, people grew so angry that they put Jesus on a cross to die. But Jesus loved them all the same. "Father," he prayed before he died. "Forgive them."

### Just for Today...

Think of someone who you can forgive. If you're not ready to forgive, ask God to forgive them first.

Day  
22

He appeared first to  
Mary Magdalene.

—Mark 16:9

**G**od's dreams for a new world didn't end when Jesus died. Three women who loved Jesus went to where he was buried, to weep and pray. But Jesus wasn't there! An angel told them, "Jesus is alive!" Jesus met them and told them, "I am risen. Go and tell all my friends: God's new world is here today!"



### Just for Today...

Imagine you are one of the women who first sees Jesus alive again. How do you tell his friends?

Day  
23

On either side of the river  
grew the tree of life.

—Revelation 22:2



**J**esus came once, to  
feed us, teach us, heal us  
and begin new life for us.

Jesus will come again to finish  
the work of God. He will make the whole  
world new. What will it be like? “God’s  
new world will be like a tree of life,” says  
Jesus. “Imagine a tree where even the  
leaves heal people. Imagine fruit that  
gives life forever. That’s what it will be  
like when I come again!”

**Just for Today...**

tell Jesus about something you hope to  
find when he comes again to make the  
whole world new.

Day  
24

The Spirit and the bride say,  
“Come.”

—Revelation 22:17

Jesus said, “This is what it will be like when I come again. It will be like a wedding, when God’s new world will be as beautiful as a bride. We will be as close as a happy husband and wife, forever and ever.” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.



**Just for Today...**

Pray one of the oldest prayers of the Church: Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.



Angels announce with songs of mirth,  
Him who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming,  
With the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.  
—*Eleanor Farjeon*



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