

Get Ready *for* Jesus



**Advent
Activity Booklet**



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Get Ready *for* Jesus

God loves to work with all creation—especially people! God always planned to send the Son of God as a human baby. God always planned to ask God's People to get ready for Jesus.

In the weeks before Christmas (called *Advent*), we remember all the ways that God got the world and humanity ready for baby Jesus and this helps us to get ready for him to come into our lives now.

God created a world for humans to live in.
God called a people together to be God's People.
God sent the prophets to show
the way for God's People to live.
God prepared a family to welcome the baby Jesus.

Although Jesus is no longer a baby, God still asks us to get ready for him. We get ready for Jesus when we spend time with God. We get ready for Jesus when we take care of one another.

This Advent, ask your family to help you get ready for baby Jesus.

On the next page you and your family can try this old Advent activity called: *Straw for the Manger!*

Materials for the Crib:

In this activity you first choose a crib for baby Jesus.

For a crib you could use:

- A wicker basket
- A shoebox
- A laundry basket



During Advent you and your family will be adding “straw” to your crib. Here are some ideas for straw:

- Real or craft straw
- Strips cut from construction paper
- Thick yarn cut into lengths of 9 to 12 inches



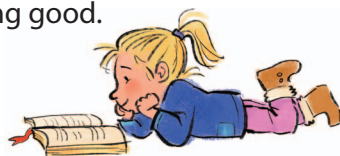
Of course, we wouldn't put a real baby in one of these! But we will do real things to welcome Jesus as we make our imaginary crib.

Here's how it works:

1. Put the empty crib where everyone can reach it.
2. Put the pile of "straw" near the crib.
3. We get ready for Jesus when we spend time with God, so you and your family can add a straw to the basket if you:



- Thank God for something good.
- Say a prayer.
- Read a Bible story.
- Go to Mass.



-
4. We get ready for Jesus when we care for others, so you and your family can add a straw to the basket if you:



- Play with a sibling.
- Put away the dishes.
- Set the table.
- Call a grandparent.
- Feed a pet.



-
5. With your family, brainstorm a list of more ways you can add straw to the basket. On Christmas Eve, when the crib is full of straw, you and your family can gather around the crib and take turns reading the Christmas story out of the Bible (Luke 2:1-20) and singing Christmas Carols like *Silent Night* and *Joy to the World!*

How soft can you and your family make the crib by Christmas?
How will you and your family join God and...

Get Ready for Jesus!

December 1

We are all the work of your hands.

—Isaiah 64:7

God makes the People of God. How does God get ready for Jesus? First God makes a people! Long ago the People of God began telling stories to one another of who God is and what God does. Do you know their stories?



Match the pictures below with the right names of God's People. Draw lines to match them together.

Noah

Adam & Eve

Moses & Miriam



The ark



*A path opens
in the sea*



A tree in a garden

Solution: The Ark-Noah; A path opens in the sea-Moses & Miriam;
A tree in a garden-Adam & Eve

December 2

May all the nations regard him as favored.

—Psalm 72:17

God Is Always With Us. Yesterday we remembered that God gathers together God's People. God did this long ago with Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses and Miriam.

God still calls people today. God still wants to work through people to get the world ready for Jesus.

Does your family use a crèche or manger scene? That shows some of the people who welcomed Jesus long ago: Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds.



But some countries include many other figures to remember that people today welcome Jesus, too.



Use clay or play dough to make figures of people you know, such as your family and friends. Add them to the crèche scene to welcome baby Jesus!



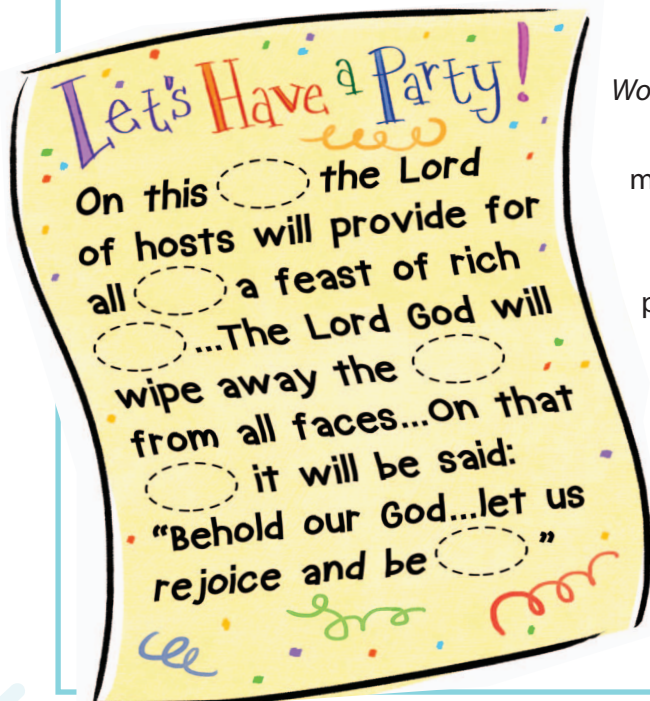
December 3

The Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples.
—Isaiah 25:6

God Is with the Prophets. It's not always easy for God's People to know what God wants: a world without fear. A world without hunger. A world filled with people who help one another. God asks the prophets to help get ready for Jesus. The prophets get ready by telling God's People what God's world can look like.



One prophet imagined God's world as a party for all people. There are missing words in his party "invitation." Can you find the missing words and fill in the blanks? You can look at Isaiah 25:6-10 for clues!



Words to use:

glad
mountain
food
day
peoples
tears

Solution: On this **mountain** the Lord of hosts will provide for all **peoples** a feast of rich **food**...The Lord God will wipe away the **tears** from all faces... On that **day** it will be said: "Behold our God...let us rejoice and be **glad**."

December 4

The Lord is an eternal Rock.
—Isaiah 26:4

What God Is Like. Yesterday we saw that the prophets help God's People see what the world can be like. The prophets also help God's People see what God is like.

One prophet imagined that God is like a Rock. Think of a rock so big it cannot be moved. If waters were rushing all around, you could stand on this rock and be safe—because it was too strong and too heavy to be moved.

The prophet saw that God is like that Rock. When life is hard for us, we can stand with God and know how to live. God gets ready for Jesus by standing with God's people, every day.



The prophet who told us that God is like a Rock also told us what that means for us. Unscramble the letters in each word to find out what the prophet wants us to do!



T

!

Solution: Trust in the Lord forever!

December 5

They went out and spread word of him through all that land.

—Matthew 9:31

Telling the Story. God gets the world ready for Jesus by helping God's People tell good news. Moses and Miriam told the good news of God leading God's people to freedom. The prophets told the good news of the world God wants. The friends of Jesus told the good news that God's own Child had come to God's world.



How would you tell the world good news about baby Jesus? Can you make a Good News website below?

- A.** What title will you write across the top?
- B.** What picture can you draw for your website?
- C.** What good news can you write on the website's page?



December 6

With your own eyes you shall see your Teacher.
—Isaiah 30:20

The Saints Help God! We might think about how God helps us, because we know God doesn't need our help. But God wants our help! God wants our help in making peace. God wants our help in serving the poor. God wants our help in getting ready for Jesus. The saints are men and women and children who say, "Yes!" to God when God asks for their help

Saint Nicholas is an Advent saint. We don't know much about who he was, but we do know that he cared for the poor. In Greek, his name means "victory for the people!" When we care for the poor, that's a victory for all God's people.



Imagine God knocks on your door today and asks for your help. What do you think God would want you to do? What would you want to say to God?



December 7



John the Baptist appeared in the desert.

—Mark 1:4

God Gets Ready with John the Baptist. Some of God's People who lived in the days of Jesus chose to get ready for Jesus. One was called John the Baptist. John taught God's People what the work of Jesus would be like. Jesus would care for the sick. Jesus would share with the poor. Jesus would tell God's good news to everyone.



To find out more about John the Baptist, solve this puzzle! Find the words that take the place of these clues to answer this question: Who was John the Baptist?

A voice of **1**  out in the 

: prepare the  of the Lord.

Make **str+8** his paths.

straight his paths.

Solution: A voice of one crying out in the desert: prepare the way of the Lord. Make

December 8

Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.

—Luke 1:28

Mary, Mother of Jesus. When God got ready for baby Jesus long ago, God put “Ask Mary to be his mother” right at the top of the “To Do” list! Today we celebrate the Blessed Mother of Jesus, Mary.



What did your family do to get ready for you to be born? Ask them to finish the To Do list below! Then write the answers on the list below.

{To Do}

1. Choose a name
2. Get diapers
3. Tell family & friends
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____



At dinner tonight, ask your family: “What did Mary do to get ready for baby Jesus?” Thank God for what your family did for you. Thank God for what Mary did for baby Jesus.

December 9

Here is your God!

—Isaiah 40:9

God Waits for Us. Sometimes it feels as if Advent goes on forever. We can hardly wait for Christmas! That's what it was like for God's People. They could hardly wait for God to send Jesus!

But here's a secret: God waits for us, too! God waits for every child, woman, and man to live like Jesus. God waits for us to care for one another. God waits for us to be happy with God.

John the Baptist came to tell God's People how to wait. Can you and your family think of good ways to wait for Christmas? For Jesus? For God's new world?



Next to the letters of John's name, see if you can write one way to wait with God!

J _____

O _____

H _____

N _____

T _____

H _____

E _____

B _____

A _____

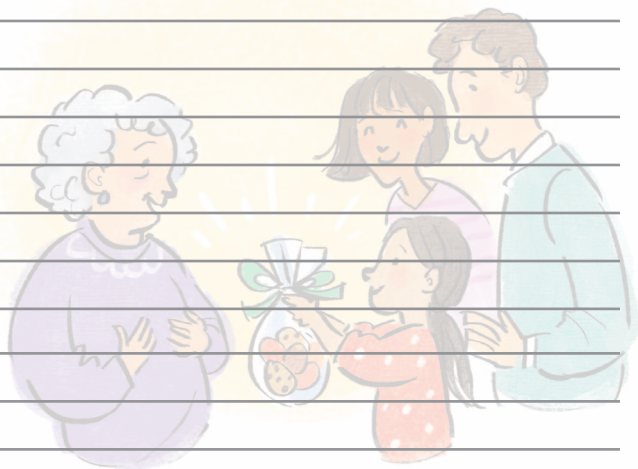
P _____

T _____

I _____

S _____

T _____



December 10

They will soar on eagles' wings.
—Isaiah 40:31

God Made John Strong. Isaiah says that God's People, those who trust in God, will feel as if they can fly "on eagles' wings." Isaiah means that when we follow God, God will give us the strength we need to do what God wants.



God gave John the Baptist strength. To find out more about John the Baptist, grab a Bible and look up clues about how he lived!

1.

John ate _____

Mark 1:6

2.

John wore _____

Matthew 3:4

3.

John taught God's people to do this _____

Luke 3:11

4.

John said this about Jesus _____

John 1:29

Solution: 1.) Locusts or wild honey; 2.) Camel's hair clothes or a belt; 3.) Share; 4.) He takes away our sins.

December 11

Go and tell John what you hear and see.

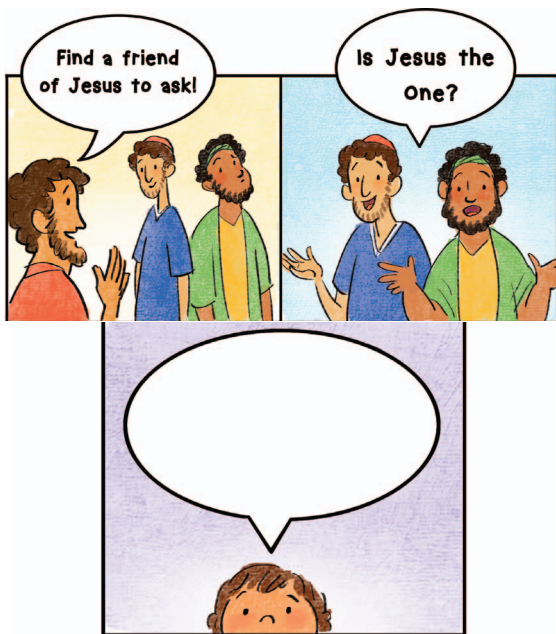
—Matthew 11:4

John Looks for God's Chosen One. When baby Jesus had grown up, John the Baptist wondered if Jesus was the one chosen by God. John the Baptist sent his friends to ask Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come?"

Jesus answered yes. Jesus told the friends of John to tell him that "The poor have the good news proclaimed to them." Then John would know that God had chosen Jesus. God always chooses to care for the poor.



Now imagine that the friends of John come to you. Imagine they ask you, "Is Jesus the One who God chooses?" How would you answer the friends of John? Finish the cartoon below!



December 12

Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.

—Luke 1:28

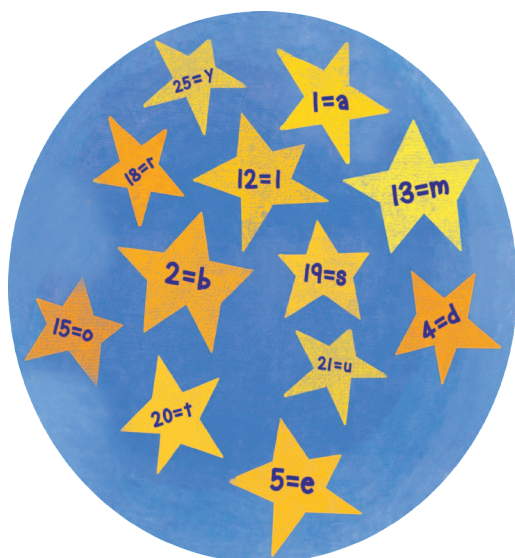
America and Mexico Get Ready with Juan and Our Lady.

One December morning, a man named Juan Diego was walking in his land of Mexico. He saw a woman who looked like she was born in his own land. She wore a blue robe with golden stars. The woman spoke to him and told Juan that she was the mother of Jesus. All the Church remembers Our Lady of Guadalupe, but especially the Church in America and Mexico.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, helps all God's people get ready. We thank her with songs and poems and words from the Bible.



Solve this code to find words from the Gospel of Luke just for Mary! *Hint:* look in the stars for clues or look up Luke 1:42 for the answer!



m

13 15 19 20

2 12 5 19 19 5 4

1 18 5

25 15 21

Solution: Most blessed are you.

December 13

Shine forth.

—Psalm 80:2

Light to Help Us Get Ready. We don't know as much about Saint Lucy as we do about John the Baptist. She lived almost two thousand years ago. All we really know is that her name means "light."

The saints give us light to see what Jesus is like. One saint feeds the poor. Another saint brings medical help to people who are sick. Another saint writes about God in such a way that people all over the world fall in love with God. We look at the saints and it helps us get ready to see God's work every day.



John the Baptist was a saint, too. Find the missing letters hidden in the lights to finish this verse. This verse is what Jesus said about John the Baptist:



He was a Burning and shining la__p,
and for a __hile you were con__ent
to re__oice in his __ight.

Solution: He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light.

December 14

Rejoice always.
—1 Thessalonians 5:16

Get Ready with Joy. The third week of Advent is a time we remember the joy of getting ready with God. When we look at Jesus, we see someone who loved his friends. We see someone who went to the homes of anyone who asked him. We see someone who took kids into his arms and blessed them.



When we think about getting ready for Christmas, we can put joy at the top of the list! Ask your family:

*What gives us joy at Christmas?
What gives joy to others at Christmas?*



Ask your family to help you think of ways to keep joy in Christmas. Write your ideas on the calendar above.

December 15

You are God my Savior.

—Psalm 25:5

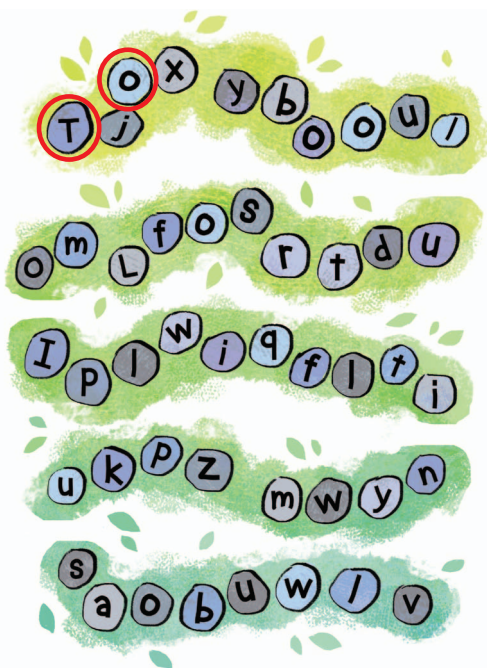
Walk with God to Get Ready. The People of God sang songs about getting ready for God. "Teach us your ways," they sang. "Show us how to walk in your paths."



Imagine that the next week is a path that you will walk. Talk this over with your family: How can we walk in God's ways?



To find one answer, circle every other letter in the five lines of the puzzle! Some lines contain one word, others contain two words.



To

December 16

A man had two sons.
—Matthew 21:28

Doing What God Wants. Once Jesus told a story about doing what God wants. He said, "Imagine a father goes to his two sons..."



Can you draw the story that Jesus told?



	<p>No way. Dad!</p> <p>Son, will you help me at work today?</p>
	<p>I should really help Dad. Okay, here I go to work!</p>
	<p>Son, will you help me at work today?</p> <p>Sure, Dad!</p>
	<p>Okay, Dad's left. I'm going to stay home & play!</p>



Jesus then asked, "Which son did what the father wanted?"
How would you answer?

December 17

May his name be forever.

—Psalm 72:17

The Gospels Get Ready for a Baby. In the first chapter of Matthew there is a long list of names. The Gospel of Matthew wants God's People to know that God has planned for baby Jesus with the help of many men and women.

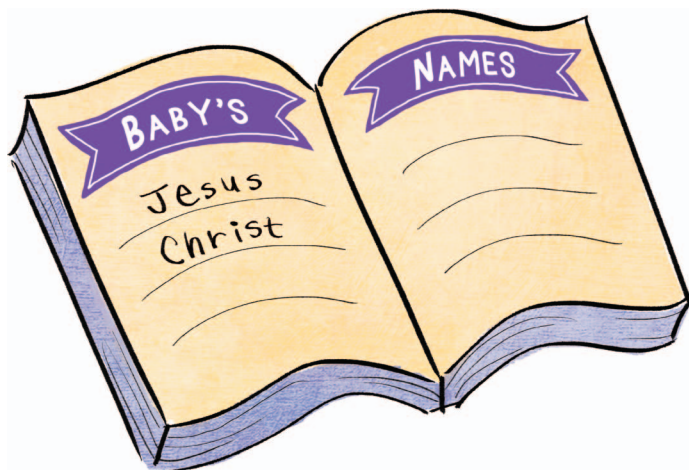
The Gospel ends with a special name: "Jesus, who is called the Christ." What do these names mean?

Jesus is the Greek way of saying the Hebrew name Joshua. Joshua lived hundreds of years before Jesus, but God's People remembered him because he was their leader. He listened to God and took them to a new place to live. Jesus listened to God. Jesus showed God's People a new way to live.

Christ is the Greek way of saying the Hebrew word *Messiah*. The word *messiah* is used in the first part of the Bible to mean a leader chosen by God. That's why the names of Christ Jesus mean: a leader who shows God's people how to live.



What names could you give to Jesus? What do those names mean to you? Add them to the baby book below!



December 18

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid.
—Matthew 1:20

Joseph Gets Ready for God's Baby. God asked Joseph to take care of baby Jesus and his mother Mary. Why did God choose Joseph?

We don't know all the reasons, but the gospels tell us that Joseph was a son of David. He had grown up knowing that God would send help to God's People.

The gospels tell us that Joseph was a carpenter. He knew how to work hard for Jesus, Mary, and God's People. **The gospels** tell us Joseph was a righteous man. God could count on Joseph to do what was right for baby Jesus. **The gospels** tell us that Joseph did what the Lord told him to do, again and again. God knew that Jesus would have a good man to help him grow up in God's way.

Can you use these clues about Joseph to solve the crossword below?

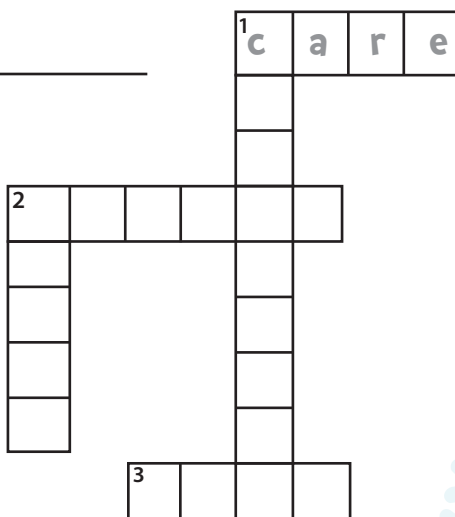


ACROSS

- God asked Joseph to _____ for Jesus & Mary.
- This man was a son of David.
- Joseph took this woman for his wife.

DOWN

- Joseph worked as a _____.
- Joseph gave this name to God's baby.



Solution: ACROSS 1. Care; 2. Joseph; 3. Mary; DOWN 1. Carpenter; 2. Jesus

December 19

Many will rejoice at his birth.

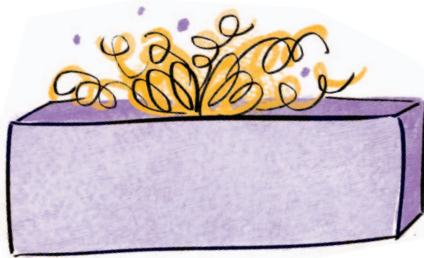
—Luke 1:14

The Gift of Joy. A gift can be fun at Christmas. What's the best gift you ever gave to someone at Christmas?

The best gifts can't be put into boxes. When someone loves you, that's a gift. When someone makes you feel good about yourself, that's a gift. When you make someone sad feel better, that's a very good gift.



Think about the kinds of gifts that can't be put into a box. Write or draw these gifts on the gift boxes below. Which gifts could give joy to your family this week? Can you give one of these gifts to your family today?



December 20

[She] shall bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.

—Isaiah 7:14

We Get Ready for Emmanuel. Jesus has so many names! We've already learned that Jesus Christ means a leader sent by God. Now we hear another name for Jesus: Emmanuel.

The Hebrew name *Emmanuel* means: God is with us. That's why we sing, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," in Advent. We sing out, "Come and be with us, God!"



One way that God comes to be with God's People is by giving us one another. Look at these pictures below. How could God's People bring God "into the picture"? What could we do to make a difference to the people shown below? Write your idea next to the pictures.







December 21

The child to be born will be called holy.

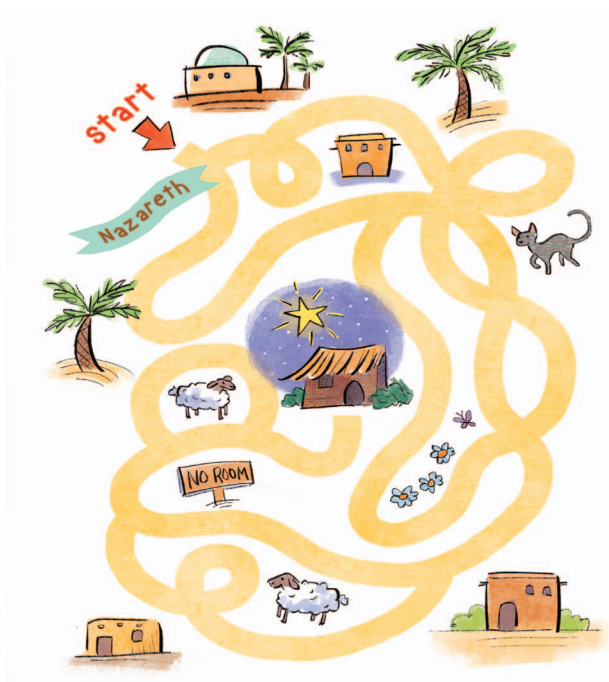
—Luke 1:35

Going to Bethlehem. Some families stay home to celebrate Christmas. Some families travel to celebrate Christmas with other family members or friends. What will your family do for Christmas?

At the very first Christmas, Mary and Joseph had to get ready for a long trip. They traveled from Nazareth to a city called Bethlehem. The trip was about a hundred miles long. They probably walked the whole way—about 10 days or more.



Can you help Mary & Joseph make their way to Bethlehem?



December 22

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.

—Luke 1:46

Mary Gets Ready with a Song. The Church says or sings the words of Mary every day as part of evening prayer. But Mary and Joseph are on the road and words are slipping out along the way!



Can you gather up the words and finish Mary's song?



Behold, from now on all _____

call me _____ .

The _____ One has done _____

things for me, and holy is his _____ .

Solution: Behold, from now on all ages call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

December 23

See, he is coming! says the Lord.

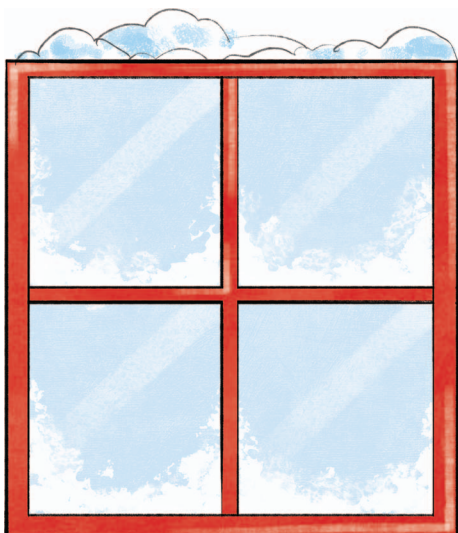
—Malachi 3:1

Watch for Jesus! One way we get ready for Christmas is by watching. We watch the mail carrier bring us Christmas cards. We watch the calendar and see that Christmas is almost here. We might watch a Christmas pageant—or people might watch us!



Watch for Jesus to show up in ways you might not expect:

- Does someone need your help today? Jesus says, "If you help someone—it's just as if you helped me."
- Do you feel like being with a friend or family member? Jesus says, "When two or three people get together and remember me, I'm there with them."
- Can you read a story in the Bible? The Bible tells us, "Jesus is the Word of God."



Draw the ways
you can see
Jesus this week
in the window.

December 24

The daybreak from on high will visit us.

—Luke 1:78

Almost Ready. When it's dawn, it's almost morning. Today is like dawn. Today it's almost Christmas.

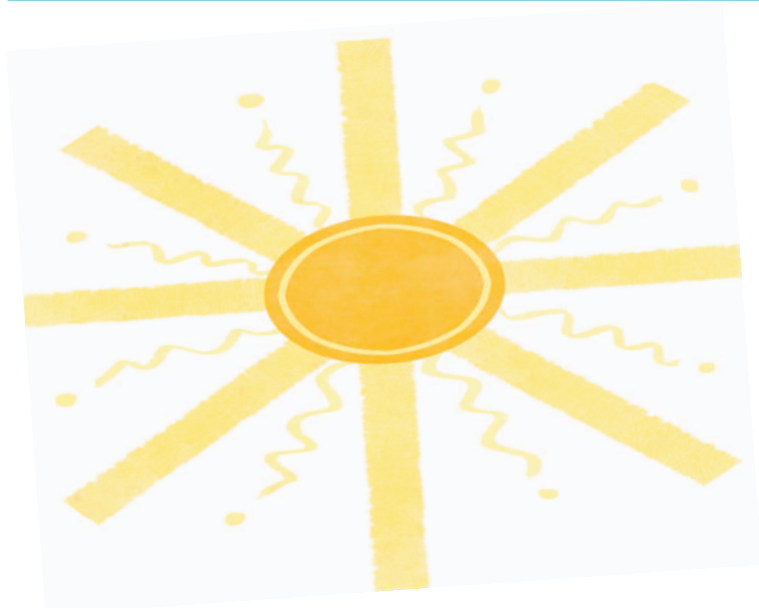
Just as the Church prays Mother Mary's words in the evening, the Church prays another song in the morning. These are the words of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist:

*The daybreak from on high will visit us
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and death's shadow,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.*



What makes for a way of peace? If you are angry, what can you do to make peace? If someone is mad at you, what can you do to make peace? Ask your family these questions, too!

Write your answers on the rays of the rising sun below.



December 25

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.

—Luke 2:14

Ready for Jesus! The shepherds in the field heard a message from a sky filled with angels.



Can you unscramble the message from the words in the angels' hands?



You will

Solution: You will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.



{To Do}

1. Call the prophets. ✓
2. Send an angel to Mary. ✓
3. Don't forget Joseph! ✓
4. Tell the shepherds. ✓
5. Jesus is born! ✓

Merry
Christmas!