

Preparing for Jesus

Yesterday & Today



Stickers and Stories for Advent

Preparing for Jesus

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today,
and forever. *Hebrews 13:8*



Yesterday



God's People heard God's promise: "I will come to you. I will be with you. I will save you forever." God's People heard, and wondered: *How* would God come to them? *How* would God be with them? *How* would God save them?

God came to God's People as a baby named Jesus, born to his mother Mary. God was with God's People now, and some of them came to the manger to see him. God saved all people through the love of Jesus, a baby lying in a manger. That was the very first Christmas.



Today and Forever



Can you imagine Joseph and Mary knocking on *your* door? “Can we come in? Baby Jesus needs a place to stay!” That’s what we want to imagine with this book of stickers. Imagine if we could be with Joseph and Mary as Jesus comes to God’s people, long ago and right here, right now.



Jesus was born more than 2,000 years ago but we remember his birth every year. Have you seen manger scenes, with baby Jesus, and

maybe sheep and cows? Most manger scenes we see today don't resemble stables from Jesus' day, but actually from the Middle Ages—a long time ago, but not 2,000 years ago!

This is OK, because Jesus was born for all people, for all time. Each of us can imagine Jesus coming to *our* home or *our* family, because Jesus wants to be close to every single one of us. Each day this Advent read a page of this booklet and remember: the birth of Jesus is for you and all people. **We'll ask you to find a sticker to place on your Christmas tree**, but we'll also ask you to look for and find Jesus in your own life today.



December 1

Prepare the way of the Lord! Isaiah 40:3



Getting ready LONG AGO:

Mary and Joseph get ready for baby Jesus. Mary lays food for the journey on a clean cloth. Joseph ties a pack to the donkey. Imagine that your day is a journey with God. How will you get ready for your journey? *Can you find a sticker that shows Mary's bread?*



December 2

I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Luke 2:10



Getting ready TODAY:

We get ready to celebrate baby Jesus at Christmas. Many of us bake Christmas goodies together. We send cards to people we love. We wrap gifts and remember the best gift of all: God gives the gift of Jesus to God's People! *Can you find a sticker that shows a Christmas treat to bake?*



December 3

Mighty signs will come from the sky. Luke 21:11

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Signs in the sky LONG AGO:

Long ago, the prophets promised that God would always love God's People. The prophets said that God's love would be brighter than even the stars or the moon in the sky. The prophet's promise came true when Jesus was born. *Can you find a sticker that shows the moon for the night sky?*



December 4

The Lord will be your light forever. Isaiah 60:19



Signs in the sky TODAY:

The Bible tells us that God's love for us is shown in many ways. God gives us family and friends to love us. God gives us the morning sunrise and the evening sunset. God gives us his own Son, Jesus: God loves us. *Can you find a sticker that shows the setting sun?*



December 5

I see a branch of the almond tree. Jeremiah 1:11

Love in bloom LONG AGO:

Long ago, the almond tree was called the “watcher” because it was the first tree to bloom at the end of winter. The prophet saw it as a sign that God was watching, too. God was watching for the time when Jesus would be born. Can you find a sticker that shows a branch in bloom?



December 6

Israel shall sprout and blossom. Isaiah 27:6



Love in bloom TODAY:

Flowers at Christmas might be from bulbs or pots, but they show us the same thing. At Christmas, God's love is in bloom! Just like a blossom ready to open, Jesus is ready to be born. *Can you find a sticker showing flowers about to open?*



December 7

Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you. Luke 1:28

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Holy Mother Mary LONG AGO:

God sent an angel to Mother Mary to tell her, “Good news! God is with you. God is with all God’s People. God will send you a baby, and you will call him Jesus.” Mary could have said, “No!” But good news for us: Mary said, “Yes!”
Can you find a sticker with spindles of wool?



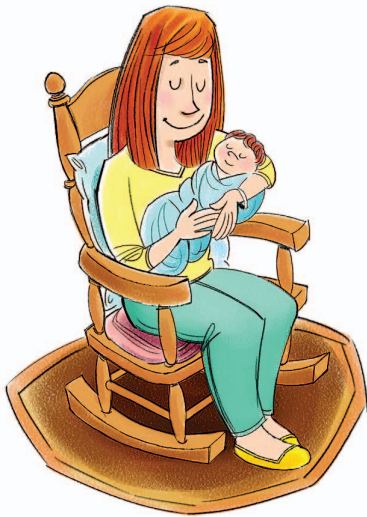
December 8

Can a mother forget her infant? Isaiah 49:15

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Holy Mother Mary TODAY:

Today we remember that even Mary, the mother of Jesus, was once a baby herself! Whenever a baby is born, we see how God loves God's People. God loves God's People as much as a mother loves her baby. *Can you find a sticker with a baby toy?*



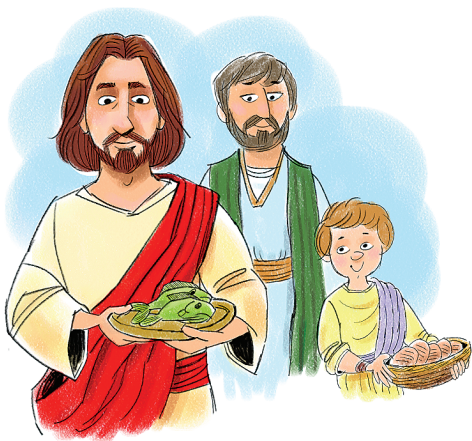
December 9

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock. Isaiah 40:11

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God feeds us LONG AGO:

Long ago, God sent bread in the desert to God's People. When Jesus came, he brought bread for God's People, too. The prophet said that's just what God's own chosen one would do: feed God's People and care for them. *Can you find a sticker with two fish?*



December 10

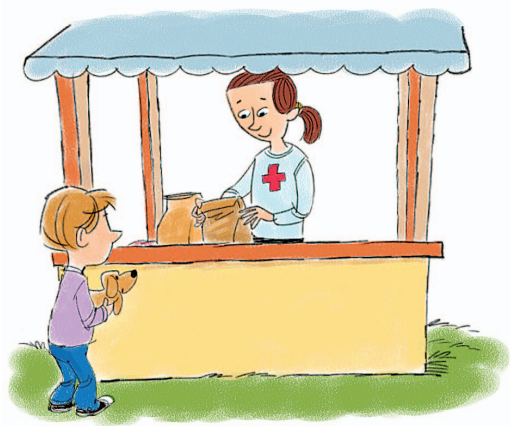
The hungry he has filled with good things.

Luke 1:53



God feeds us TODAY:

God feeds God's People today, too. When we gather for the Mass, we are God's People who come together to share God's bread. When we go out into the world, God asks us to feed the hungry. All who share the Mass and share with the poor are "filled with good things." *Can you find a sticker with a lunch sack?*



December 11

Your word is a lamp for my feet. Psalm 119:105



Lighting the way for others LONG AGO:

The psalm says that God's Word is like a lamp. God's Word shows us how to live! God's Word tells us, "Love your neighbor. Help one another. Be kind." How did Jesus love and help others long ago? *Can you find a sticker with a lamp?*



December 12

You are the light of the world. Matthew 5:14

Lighting the way for others TODAY:

Jesus told us that when we live like him, we are lights for the whole world. Who needs your help at home? Who wants your friendship at school? *Can you find a sticker with a flashlight?*



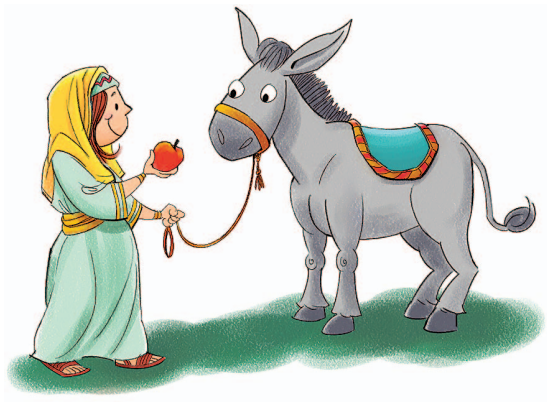
December 13

*I was hungry and you gave me food.
Matthew 25:35*

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We feed others LONG AGO:

In the Bible, sharing food with others is the first kind thing that people can do. Jesus says that when we feed the hungry, we feed Jesus himself! How can you share food with the hungry today? *Can you find a sticker with a piece of fruit?*



December 14

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Psalm 34:9



We feed others TODAY:

In every time and place, people celebrate good news by sharing food with one another. What Christmas foods does your family like to make? Is there a way you could share these Christmas foods with others? *Can you find a sticker with a gift of bread?*



December 15

The dove came back to him. Genesis 8:11



Carrying good news LONG AGO:

In the story of the ark, Noah waits on a lonely sea for a sign of peace from God. His heart is glad to see the dove in flight with a piece of olive branch in its mouth. Good news! Dry land is near! Noah can leave the lonely ark. *Can you find a sticker with a dove and olive branch?*



December 16

The poor have the good news proclaimed to them. Matthew 11:5

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Carrying good news TODAY:

In the story of a cold night, a child somewhere wants something warm to put on her hands. Her heart is glad when she finds mittens on Christmas morning. Good news! Someone cares enough to share a gift of warmth! *Can you find a sticker with a pair of mittens?*



December 17

The time came for her to have her child. Luke 2:6

Waiting for Jesus LONG AGO:

Long ago, Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. Mary had kept Jesus a secret within her for nine months. Joseph had cared for Mary's secret for nine months. They had worked and walked together, and now, together, they waited—for Jesus. *Can you find the sticker of a manger, waiting for Jesus?*



December 18

Behold...everything is ready. Matthew 22:4

Waiting for Jesus TODAY:

For days now, we have made Christmas cards. We have wrapped Christmas presents. We have baked Christmas cookies. We decorate the house. All things are ready! And we are waiting to celebrate Christmas: we are waiting for Jesus. *Can you find a sticker of a Christmas tree star?*



December 19

They were overjoyed at seeing the star.

Matthew 2:10

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Shining in darkness LONG AGO:

Jesus was born in a dark time: soldiers bullied God's People. The poor had nowhere to live and little to eat. There was more war than peace. But in the middle of this darkness, a star shone over the manger where Jesus lay. In the middle of darkness, great joy came to all the world. *Can you find a sticker with a shining star?*



December 20

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5

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Shining in darkness TODAY:

The Church celebrates Advent in the very darkest days of the year. We light candles. We sing together. We remember that God loves us, and we love one another. Joy shines like a candle in the darkness. *Can you find a sticker with a lit candle?*



December 21

The angel of the Lord appeared to them. Luke 2:9



Singing to God LONG AGO:

When Jesus was born, the sky was filled with angels, singing to God and God's People. "Glory to God in the highest!" they sang. "Peace to God's People on earth!" they sang. Imagine you are an angel. What song do you sing when Jesus is born? *Can you find a sticker with an angel and trumpet?*



December 22

*Come before the LORD with a joyful song.
Psalm 100:2*



Singing to God TODAY:

When we celebrate Christmas, we love to sing to God and to one another. “Joy to the world!” we sing. “O come, all ye faithful!” we sing. Imagine you are writing a new song for God and God’s People at Christmas. What words will you sing? *Can you find a sticker with a drum?*



December 23

The shepherds said to one another, "Let us go, then, to see." Luke 2:15



Journey to Jesus LONG AGO:

Long ago, shepherds lived apart from the rest of God's People. They were poor. They lived in the fields. They were not welcome in the homes of others. But God chose the shepherds to hear the good news first. They were the right choice! They immediately left their fields to journey to the baby Jesus. *Can you find a sticker with a sheep?*



December 24

Come to me. Matthew 11:28

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Journey to Jesus TODAY:

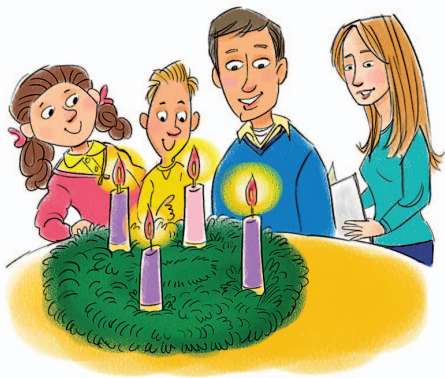
When Christmas comes, families travel to see one another. They tell the story of Christmas. They sing the songs of Christmas. They share the foods of Christmas. God blesses us in these happy days, and then tells us, "Good news! You are my family, too. You are the ones I've chosen to go out and share your love with all the world." *Can you find a sticker with a family dog?*



December 25



Jesus comes to God's people, long ago and right here, right now. Today Jesus is born in the hearts of God's People. Today Jesus comes to all those you love--to all those who love you. Today Jesus comes to all people, close to us or far away. Come and see: Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem: Jesus in the hearts of God's People. Merry Christmas!





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Silent Night



*Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace*

