

LEADING OUR CHILDREN IN OUR HOMES

Christmas catalogs piled high, numerous parties to celebrate during November, trips to Malls laden with gifts, waiting impatiently for Santa Claus to bring presents to every little girl and boy. Is this a great way to find the meaning of Advent? No

Now is your chance to shine as priest and minister to your children in your home. Lead them to discovering the true meaning of Advent, waiting for, and preparing for the Savior.

In prayer, at every meal, say a prayer that teaches your family about Advent. There are advent prayers later in this parent letter.

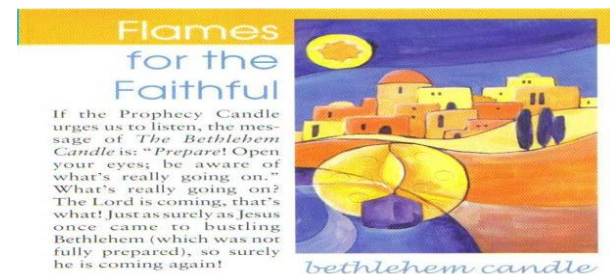


Have reminders of Advent in visible places. Have an Advent Wreath on you dining table; let the children light a candle each day.



Raise the Christmas Tree, but have near it a Christmas crèche with the darling symbols of the baby and the animals. Make it a time of prayer to set up the crèche. Some families make it a tradition to add new symbols to the crèche each week.

Help the children to mark the long long time of Advent in a prayerful way. Put an Advent calendar on the door of the refrigerator, with a daily prayer or action for the children.



Adopt a Holy Day and celebrate it in your family, a day other than Christmas. On these Holy Days, forget about the commercial side of Christmas. Attend Mass. Have a party, invite the neighbors. Celebrate the meaning of the day and the season. Make it a family tradition in a way that even your youngest child can relate to. Some obvious candidates (but there are many more options) are:

- St. Nicholas Day December 6
- Immaculate Conception December 8
- Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Posada (ask one of our Hispanic friends)

Finally, do something of service to others. Let the kids experience the grace of giving. Simple idea, maybe they sweep the walk for a neighbor. More involved, have your family help out at Metropolitan Ministries; make a special trip to buy a gift for a displaced Haitian. See below

Parents, you are the best ones to bring your children to the true spirit waiting and prayer and preparation for Advent.