

Advent 2020

Gather around every day this month
to read the story of how God sent joy to the world
with the gift of His Son, Jesus. While you're at it,
spread some joy of your own as a family!

<p>A young couple, Mary and Joseph, get engaged.</p> <p>Kick off the month with hot chocolate for everyone. Take turns talking about your favorite Christmases of the past.</p> <p>1</p>	<p>One day, God sends the angel, Gabriel, to Mary. Gabriel has some very special news!</p> <p>Ask everyone to choose someone, and write a personalized Christmas card to them. Put each card in an envelope, address and stamp them, and mail them.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Mary is greatly troubled when she hears the angel's greeting.</p> <p>Decorate your bedroom doors with wrapping paper, and put up a sign with a Christmas greeting.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Gabriel responds to Mary, saying: "Don't be afraid. God is very happy with you!"</p> <p>Take a car ride or walk on foot to see Christmas lights and decorations in your neighborhood or community.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Gabriel tells Mary the special news: She will have a baby boy, and the baby will be named Jesus.</p> <p>Clean out the toy bins, closets, and drawers. Donate items to a local shelter or thrift store.</p> <p>5</p>
<p>Gabriel shares with Mary more details of God's plan: "Jesus will be great and will be called God's very own son!"</p> <p>Have a family picnic in front of the Christmas tree.</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Mary doesn't understand how she can have a baby without being married, but the angel, Gabriel, assures her of a great truth: Nothing is impossible with God.</p> <p>Read a Christmas book or google a story online. Read it aloud together.</p> <p>7</p>	<p>"I serve God with my life and want all that you have said to happen," Mary tells the angel, and he leaves.</p> <p>Hide candy canes around your house. Have a family candy cane hunt, and see who can collect the most.</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Mary visits her cousin, Elizabeth, and is so overwhelmed with God's goodness, she sings a song of praise.</p> <p>Have a gift wrapping competition. Who can wrap the fastest?</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Caesar Augustus wants to know how many people are in his empire, so he tells all the people to go back to their hometown to be registered and counted.</p> <p>Google search Christmas traditions around the world, and ask your family to vote on a new tradition to adopt.</p> <p>10</p>
<p>Joseph brings Mary, who is pregnant, to his hometown of Bethlehem to be counted.</p> <p>Gather your extra towels and blankets, and wash and dry them. Then, as a family, go together to donate them to an animal shelter.</p> <p>11</p>	<p>While Joseph and Mary are in Bethlehem, the time comes for the baby to be born.</p> <p>Eat dinner together by candlelight or Christmas lights.</p> <p>12</p>	<p>Mary gives birth to Jesus, wraps Him in swaddling cloths, and lays Him in a manger because there is no room for them anywhere else.</p> <p>Grab some stuffed animals and towels or small blankets. Search how to swaddle a baby. Encourage everyone to try swaddling. Have a contest to see whose is best!</p> <p>13</p>	<p>At night in a nearby field, shepherds are watching their flocks.</p> <p>Bundle up and go outside after nightfall. Look at the stars—those are the same stars the shepherds saw in the sky the night Jesus was born.</p> <p>14</p>	<p>The sky lights up—God has sent an angel to the shepherds to tell them the good news of Jesus' birth.</p> <p>Ask everyone to sign a family "Thank You" card to your mail carrier. Feel free to add a bottle of water and a \$10 gift card for lunch!</p> <p>15</p>
<p>When the shepherds see the angel, they're afraid!</p> <p>Get those phones ready and have a silly, Christmas-themed photoshoot.</p> <p>16</p>	<p>The angel tries to calm the shepherds, saying: "Don't be afraid. I bring wonderful news that will bring joy to all of the world!"</p> <p>Create a playlist using everyone's favorite Christmas song. Then, crank up the volume, press play, and have a family dance party!</p> <p>17</p>	<p>"A Savior, the Rescuer you have been waiting for, is born today!" the angel proclaims to the shepherds.</p> <p>Grab blankets and popcorn, and have a Christmas movie marathon together.</p> <p>18</p>	<p>The angel explains the shepherds will find the Savior, a baby, wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.</p> <p>The big day is almost here! To prepare, turn up the Christmas music, assign chores, and clean the house from top to bottom.</p> <p>19</p>	<p>More angels come to celebrate the good news—they arrive at the shepherd's field and begin praising God!</p> <p>Declare today is Red and Green Day! Tell everyone to dress in all red and green—even if it doesn't match!</p> <p>20</p>
<p>The shepherds leave their flocks and hurry to find Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who is lying in a manger.</p> <p>Break out the cookie cutters, and bake Christmas cookies together.</p> <p>21</p>	<p>After they see the baby, the shepherds excitedly go and tell the good news to everyone they see!</p> <p>Call or FaceTime a family member and sing them a Christmas carol.</p> <p>22</p>	<p>The shepherds return to their flocks, praising God for all they have seen and heard.</p> <p>Enjoy a family board game night in front of the Christmas tree.</p> <p>23</p>	<p>Mary names the baby Jesus, just as the angel told her to do.</p> <p>Choose a scene from the Christmas story, assign roles, and act it out.</p> <p>24</p>	<p>God has sent Jesus to rescue us because God loves us so very much!</p> <p>Read the story of Jesus' birth from Luke 1:26–2:21. Remember the greatest gift of all—the hope we have in our Savior, Jesus!</p> <p>25</p>