

## **MACA! Make Advent about Christ Again! ~ WWJW? What Would Jesus Want?**

Medjugorje Message from Our Blessed Mother on Nov 25, 2024: "Dear Children, In this time of the grace of expectation, I desire to call you to prayer for advent to be prayer of the family. Sin a special way little children whom I tenderly embrace, I encourage you to prayer for peace in the world, for peace to prevail over peacelessness and hatred."

### **1. Let's take a virtual trip to the tiny village of Nazareth!** What if you ran into Mary & Joseph at the market in Nazareth on Jesus' 15<sup>th</sup> Birthday & they invited you to come celebrate with them? What would we learn?

**\*What if we asked - what have they been doing for the last month to prepare for this celebration?**

- We've been asking Jesus what He wants for **HIS** birthday!
- Frequent retelling of stories about His birth & early life (Joyful rosary mysteries, Joseph's dreams, etc.)
- Making pilgrimages to some of these important sites of His life – even visiting cousin John & Elizabeth
- Hosting special meals with friends and family to commemorate these stories
- Keeping holy the Sabbath by reading the Torah together, Singing and Praising God for His gift to us

**\*What if we asked - How are you all going to celebrate this amazing day? The birth of your son and our savior!**

- Planned a special FEAST with friends and family
- To spend intentional, meaningful, loving face to face time with Jesus!
- Share why we love Jesus & our favorite personal memories of Him
- Read the Torah, Sing Praises and thanking God the Father for sending Him to us
- Our gifts for Him are planning special trips – fishing, camping, eating together – for the next year

### **2. How can we make Advent all about Jesus!** What can we learn for them on how to prepare for Jesus' Birthday!

**\*Realize the difference between preparation time (Advent) and Jesus' Birthday – its not over on Dec. 25th!**

- Look at how Mary & Joseph might have prepared above and convert to 2024 traditions
  - a. Collection of Advent ideas on back to ponder - Lovingly offered to Jesus – lots of links with resources
  - b. Have family meal to focus on Preparing our Hearts, Homes and Families for the arrival of Jesus
- What we have done in the past that kept Christ in the forefront of the season:
  - a. Prayed the [Advent Wreath](#), Set out Nativity Sets & Bethlehem Village, Organized [Service Projects](#), [Drew names](#) for Secret Santas (Kris Kringle), Gift Swap Game w/ Jesus gifts, Caroling, Gave presents to Jesus, attended Advent events, confession, focus on experiences/time together instead of gifts, made [handmade](#) religious gifts...
- What we are going to add this year and make new traditions to prepare for His arrival:
  - a. Set up the nativity set and move Mary, Joseph and three kings each day – [straw for manger idea](#)
  - b. Prepare our Kitchen table to be centralized prayer space for nightly reflections
  - c. Eat family meals at table each night ~ [light Advent wreath](#) & pray; [celebrate saint feast days](#) - consider unplugged candle lit [Nazareth Meals](#) (olives, dates, nuts, bread, wine) to retell stories of Jesus
  - d. Add [fasting days](#) (M,W,F) deciding what to offer up & turn our phone screens to greyscale till Christmas
  - e. Pick "Christ Kindl" [Advent Angels](#) with different groups and do secret sacrifices and prayers for them – reveal later
  - f. Turn our tree into a [Jesse tree](#) and read readings – put on other ornaments later in season
  - g. Make new prayer traditions – Daily [Angelus](#), Christmas [Novena](#), [O Antiphons](#), put bible on kitchen table...

### **3. How can we celebrate His birth from Dec 25th thru Feb 2nd – Candlemas?**

- What we have done in the past that kept Christ in the forefront of the season:
  - i. Christmas morn tradition of [reading the birth story from Luke](#), Singing Happy Birthday to Baby Jesus then breakfast and gifts, 9pm New Years Celebration & [resolutions](#), Generate [words](#), [Saints](#), virtues and spiritual goals for the year to focus on – make new habits, Epiphany [marking of our doors](#), an annual [Dance](#) party, then taking down decor
- What we are going to add this year and make new traditions to celebrate His birth after Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>:
  - i. "Pray" the [12 Days of Christmas](#)
  - ii. Focus on Feast Days ([Christmas Solemnities](#)) and turning them into holy moments with our family
  - iii. Start new traditions – like weekly Zoom prayer call with extended family
  - iv. Learn more about [Candlemas](#) – Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> and how to celebrate them

### **4. Your turn! What will you give Jesus this year? Take the Birthday Challenge** – just pick a few – don't overwhelm yourself – **ask yourself What does Jesus Want From YOU?** [What are you willing to Give Him](#) – December 25<sup>th</sup> and the whole year through... **Take some time to ponder these, write a letter to Jesus for His birth & share face to face in adoration**

From December 1st to the 24th we FAST/Prepare for His birth.... Then we FEAST/Celebrate for 40 days to Feb 2nd!

Day	Date	ACTION	Challenge
1	12/01/24	<b>STOP</b>	Have a special dinner and decide how you can Make Advent about Christ Again this year
2	Mon 12/2	<b>LIST</b>	Make a <a href="#">DIY Jesse Tree</a> and <a href="#">Download</a> daily readings – put a bible on your kitchen table
3	Tues 12/3	<b>MAKE</b>	Make an <a href="#">Advent Wreath</a> and offer <a href="#">daily prayers while lighting each candle</a> – Say <a href="#">Prayers</a>
4	Weds 12/4	<b>GROW</b>	<a href="#">Feast of St Barbara</a> Plant some wheat/other seeds and watch them grow in Advent
5	Thurs 12/5	<b>PREP</b>	Set up Nativity Set w/o Baby Jesus and place Mary, Joseph, & kings far away! Move daily
6	Fri 12/6	<b>FILL</b>	<a href="#">Feast of St Nick</a> – <a href="#">put out your shoes</a> and fill with <a href="#">coins</a> , medals, <a href="#">Candy Canes</a>
7	Sat 12/7	<b>WASH</b>	1st Sat. – Go to mass /confession for five 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturdays – <a href="#">Learn why</a> & <a href="#">Seek His Holy Face</a>
8	Sun 12/8	<b>WEAR</b>	<a href="#">Feast of the Immaculate Conception</a> – Wear White today and ponder this miracle
9	Mon 12/9	<b>FAST</b>	Revisit the <a href="#">tradition of fasting</a> on Mon, Weds and Fri/detaching from something you want
10	Tues. 12/10	<b>SALT</b>	<a href="#">Feast of Our Lady of Loreto</a> Consecrate your home w/ holy water & <a href="#">blessed salt</a>
11	Weds. 12/11	<b>PICK</b>	Use <a href="http://www.DrawNames.com">http://www.DrawNames.com</a> to pick “Advent Angels” & plan a reveal party in Jan.
12	Thurs. 12/12	<b>WWMD</b>	<a href="#">Feast Our Lady of Guadalupe</a> –Share the story with your family – Be creative or <a href="#">crafty</a> !
13	Fri 12/13	<b>BAKE</b>	<a href="#">Feast of St Lucy</a> Bake a treat and give to the poor for this Swedish Tradition <b>or make <a href="#">this</a></b>
14	Sat 12/14	<b>GRAY</b>	Turn your phone to black and white until Jesus’ Birth – Wow – really packs a punch!
15	Sun 12/15	<b>WEAR</b>	WEAR your MACA Bracelet or something else to remind you about Jesus
16	Mon 12/16	<b>PRAY</b>	<b>St Andrew <a href="#">Christmas Novena</a> Begins 12/16 till Dec 25th!</b> Sign up at <a href="#">Pray More Novenas</a>
17	Tues. 12/17	<b>SING</b>	<b>The <a href="#">O Antiphons</a> Start 12/17 – 23<sup>rd</sup></b> Click <a href="#">here</a> for details & <a href="#">Sing praises</a> to Jesus - <a href="#">Listen</a>
18	Weds. 12/18	<b>LOVE</b>	Do a random act of kindness/love in secret for Jesus – <a href="#">Straw for His manger</a> idea
19	Thurs. 12/19	<b>HEAR</b>	LISTEN – be quiet – go to an hour of adoration – Kneel down & Adore Jesus
20	Fri 12/20	<b>SKIP</b>	Meat on all Fridays <a href="http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/fast_and_abstinence.htm">http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/fast_and_abstinence.htm</a>
21	12/21/13	<b>SEEK</b>	<b>Los <a href="#">Posadas</a></b> – Head to a neighbors’ home with baked goods to share, but no room to stay
22	12/22/13	<b>NOTE</b>	Write letter to Jesus telling of your gift to Him and commitments for 2025 – read it to Him
23	12/23/13	<b>GIVE</b>	<b>CALL, MAIL or TEXT</b> a friend asking How You Can Pray for them and then Pray with them
24	Tues. 12/24	<b>TURN</b>	Turn the lights on your tree on and Electronics OFF – try Italian <a href="#">Feast of the seven fishes</a>
25	Weds. 12/25	<b>READ</b>	Read the nativity story from the bible and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus before open gifts
			<b>Happy Birthday Jesus – Let’s Celebrate! Now the real FUN begins through Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>!</b>
<b>Try these other four-letter verbs – brainstorm how they can become Advent Aids or Birthday Blessings!</b>			
<b>SHOW ~ MARK ~ DRAW ~ HEAL ~ HANG ~ BOND ~ FACE ~ WAKE ~ FORM ~ KEEP ~ FOLD ~ PLAN ~ CARE ~ HOPE</b>			
<b>FIND ~ ZOOM ~ TELL ~ ROLL ~ LOOK (Up) ~TURN (Off) ~ LITE ~ REST ~ PLAY ~ STAY ~ LIVE</b>			

### Links to help Celebrate Jesus’ Birth – Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> /Christmas through Feb. 2nd /Candlemas!

- Pray the [12 days of Christmas](#), Make [Epiphany](#) come alive, Celebrate the [Christmas Solemnities](#), Learn about [Saint Basil](#), Celebrate Candlemas, [Saint Generator for the Year](#) ~ Inspirational [Word Generator](#) for the Year, Set up a [HOME Altar](#) and say these [Prayers](#) and start a [weekly Family Prayer time](#) on Zoom for your family

**Other Great Advent Resources:** Some of my favorites – worth clicking on! Trust me!

<https://hallow.com/advent/>

<https://waterloocatholics.org/advent-resources>

<https://www.ourcatholicprayers.com/advent-prayers.html>

<https://www.catholicicing.com/category/christmas-crafts/>

<https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/advent/family-advent-activities.html>

<https://refinelif.co/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Refine-Advent-Guide-Digital.pdf>

<https://www.ncregister.com/features/7-ways-to-live-advent-as-a-catholic-family>

**Awesome Book:** [Around the Year](#) with the Von Trapp Family by [Maria Von Trapp](#)

*Blessed Mary and Courageous Joseph, Please watch over our family as we make preparations to celebrate the birth of Your son, Jesus Christ. Remind us daily to seek peace, patience, and love in our homes, our hearts, our families and in this world at this busy time of year. Teach us to detach from the world, unplug from electronics and turn away from all distractions to focus clearly on your Son, Jesus and the beautiful, life-giving gift of His incarnation! Thank you for your prayerful example and showing us the path to heaven. Help us to always follow your lead, Amen!*

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