



Celebrating Christmas

Engage: Page 87

- ▶ Display a picture of Mary. **Ask:** *Why is Mary an important part of Christmas? (She is the mother of Jesus, whose birth we celebrate on Christmas Day.)*
- ▶ Read aloud the session title and text. On a dry-erase board or sheet of paper, draw a time line showing the Sundays in Advent, Christmas, the Epiphany, and the Baptism of the Lord. Together look at a calendar to find the Epiphany and the end of the Christmas season for this year. **Say:** *In this session we will learn how the Church celebrates the birth of Jesus.*
- ▶ Ask your child to take a moment to imagine he or she is kneeling next to Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in the manger. Pray aloud the prayer together.

Explore: Page 88

- ▶ **Say:** *Let's imagine we are having a special guest come to our home to visit.* **Ask:** *What are some things our family might do to make the guest feel welcome?*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud the heading and first two paragraphs. Discuss the questions. **Say:** *Celebrating Christmas is similar to welcoming a special guest into our home.*
- ▶ Read aloud the third paragraph and have your child complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Reading God's Word feature. **Ask:** *How does Jesus' birth show that God is with us? (Jesus is God's Son. Jesus is God's gift to us.)*

Reflect: Page 89

- ▶ Together look at a religious Advent calendar. **Ask:** *What do you think we will see when we open the window on December 25? Review the special preparations of Advent and how they help prepare us to celebrate the joy of Christmas.*
- ▶ Read aloud Mass During Christmas. **Say:** *When Christmas finally arrives, families are ready to rejoice. Jesus is here! He is in our hearts, and he is with us.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud What We Experience and complete the activity.
- ▶ Read aloud the Ready for the Sacraments feature. **Say:** *Jesus wants to be with us always. He is eager for the day when you can receive him as often as possible, at least once a week, in the Eucharist.*



Art Exploration: Page 249

- ▶ Find in a magazine, in a book, or online a picture that shows the Nativity scene in Bethlehem.
- ▶ **Ask:** *What do you see in this picture?* Encourage your child to describe the picture in detail, including the setting, the people, and the animals.
- ▶ **Say:** *A Nativity scene reminds us of Jesus' birth and how much God the Father loves us.*
- ▶ Have your child turn to page 249. Read aloud the introduction and discuss the question.
- ▶ Read aloud The Feast of Christmas. **Ask:** *How do we celebrate and remember the importance of Christmas?* (attend Mass, set up a Nativity scene in our homes or yards, send cards to family and friends) *Why do you think we give gifts to one another at Christmas?* (to recall the special gift that God gave us in Jesus) **Say:** *God gave us talents that are meant to be shared. When we give someone the gift of ourselves, we are living as Jesus did.*
- ▶ Have your child read aloud You Are a Gift and complete the activity. Examples of talents might include reading to a younger child, playing an instrument, or sharing a positive attitude.
- ▶ Invite your child to design a Christmas card to give to a parishioner or neighbor who is homebound. Have your child fold construction paper in half, decorate the card, and write a special Christmas message inside. Close with a silent prayer asking that all people be remembered on Jesus' birthday.

Respond: Page 80

- ▶ Ask your child to read aloud the Faith Summary. Review the Words I Learned in this session. Read aloud Ways of Being Like Jesus. Ask your child to suggest specific ways he or she can share joy with others.
- ▶ Read aloud the prayer as your child follows along. Pray the Sign of the Cross together.
- ▶ Read aloud the With My Family suggestions. Invite your child to choose one or more to complete today.