

Celebrating Christmas

Keep these ideas in mind as you study **Unit 3, Session 15**.

The Christmas season, during which we celebrate Jesus' birth, follows the Advent season.

PAGE 87

The Christmas season begins with the celebration of Mass on Christmas Eve and includes the Feast of the Holy Family and the Feast of the Epiphany. It ends with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

PAGE 87

The word *Christmas* comes from the Old English *Cristes Maesse*, which means "the Mass of Christ." Today we call it Christmas because we celebrate Christ's birth at Mass.

PAGE 87

Another title for Jesus is the Bread of Life. He satisfies our hunger for love, forgiveness, nourishment, and strength.

PAGE 88

In Hebrew the word *Bethlehem* means "house of bread."

PAGE 89

White is the liturgical color of the Christmas season. This color reminds us of the purity and joy of Jesus' birth.

PAGE 89

During Christmas we often see a Nativity scene with baby Jesus in the manger, and with Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and the Magi.

PAGE 89

On the Feast of the Epiphany, we remember the Magi's visit to Bethlehem, when Jesus was revealed to the world as God's Son who was sent into the world to show us how to live.

ART PRINT 15

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