

# Liturgical Year Supplemental Lesson

## Advent and Christmas

### Correlated Materials

Student Text: Chapter 10, pp. 40–43;  
Chapter 11, pp. 44–47  
Activity Book, pp. 38–40

#### LESSON FOCUS

God’s people waited a long time for Jesus to be born. The Church celebrates the season of Advent as a time of prayerful waiting for the birth of Jesus Christ. During Advent we are filled with joy and hope.

#### AIMS

- Students will understand that through acts of kindness Advent can be a time of joyful waiting.
- Students will understand that Jesus was born because He loves us.
- Students will understand that Christmas is not just for remembering Jesus’ birth, but Christmas is also a time for having a loving heart.

Note: See p. xvi for overall supplemental lesson aims, CCC, and Scripture.

### Begin the Lesson

## Preparation (10–15 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

**SCRIPTURE:** Student Text, p. 37

**“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).**

Mary says yes to become the Mother of Jesus. Mary became the Mother of God when she said yes to the angel Gabriel.

Student Text, p. 41

**“... you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12).**

Jesus was born in a manger.

**SACRED ART:** Student Text, p. 36

*The Annunciation, Filippino*

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the Mother of Jesus.

Student Text, p. 40

*The Nativity, Barocci*

Jesus the Savior is born.

**PRAYER WITH CHILDREN:** Hail Mary, Student Text, p. 129

## Proclamation (1 minute)

*(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)*

God’s people waited a long time for Jesus to be born. Advent is a season of waiting for the birth of Jesus.

## Lesson Explanation (35–45 minutes)

*Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.*

## MATERIALS

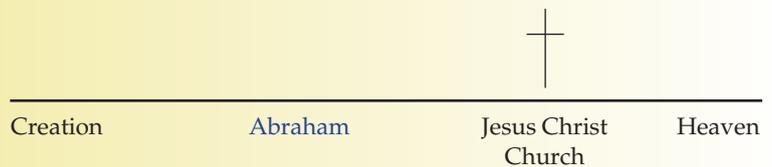
- Bible
- White board and markers
- Paper, crayons
- Nativity diorama and shoeboxes, glue, paper, scissors, crayons (see Focus 1 Optional Activities)
- Small Christmas tree and hand-outs of ornaments for students to color, cut, and hang on the tree (see Focus 2 Optional Activities)

## WORD TO KNOW

**Advent:** the time starting four Sundays before Christmas when we get ready for the birth of Jesus

## Focus 1: God's people waited a long time for Jesus to come.

- **Who would like to share a short story about your life?** (Have one or two students tell about their parents, family, and one event of their life.)
  - Today we will begin with a short story about God's story of His family. We are all a part of God's family.
  - **Using sacred art** in the Student Text, give an overview of the story of salvation history. Prompt students to tell about the different events they have learned so far.
    - Remind students that after Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they were banished from paradise, but God had a plan to save His people. God's people had to wait a very long time for Jesus to come.
    - **Page 6:** God is our Father.
    - **Page 10:** Heaven is our home.
    - **Page 14:** God watches over us and takes care of us.
    - **Page 18:** God gave each of us a guardian angel.
    - **Page 22:** Adam and Eve lived in paradise where everything was perfect; there was no death.
    - **Page 26:** Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and the gates of Heaven were closed. God's people will now have to wait a long time for a Savior to reopen the gates of Heaven.
    - **Page 30:** Abraham was faithful to God.
    - **Page 33:** Moses was the first prophet who prepared the people for God's coming.
    - **Page 36:** Mary says yes; she will be the Mother of the promised Savior.
    - **Page 40:** The Savior, Jesus, is born.
- **Draw** a simple timeline of salvation history (Creation, Abraham, Jesus Christ, Heaven):



- **Point out** that the length of time that God's people waited for Christ from Abraham was two thousand years. Draw an arrow to emphasize the length of time.
- Jesus came to us because He loves us. **What can you do to love Him back?** (Be kind to one another.)

**Conclusion:** God's people waited a long time for Jesus to come.

## Saint Nicholas and Santa Claus

Though one of the most popular saints in the Church, little is known about Saint Nicholas except that he was born in Parara, a city of Lycia in Asia Minor, and that he was the bishop of Myra in the fourth century. His relics are preserved today in the church of San Nicola in Bari, Italy. He is the patron saint of mariners, merchants, bakers, travelers, and children, and his feast day is December 6. Tradition asserts that he became well known during his life for giving generous gifts to many people, including the poor. In the United States he is identified with Santa Claus, the jolly man in a red suit who brings presents to children every Christmas Eve.

## December 6 Customs

Every year on the night of December 5, Saint Nicholas passes through towns in Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands and leaves coins or other small gifts for the children to discover the next day, which is his feast day.

**Focus 2: Celebrations and Advent.** We celebrate our time of waiting for Jesus during a Church season called Advent. During Advent we are filled with joy and hope.

- **What events do you celebrate at home or school?** (*Birthdays, sports events, Fourth of July, etc.*)
  - As Catholics we celebrate the people and events of the Bible.
  - **Point** to the timeline and remind students that each person or event was part of God's plan for us to get to Heaven. Jesus was the final answer to God's plan.
  - We celebrate Jesus' birth as a very special time of the Church year.
  - **Who knows what we call this special event?** (*Christmas.*)
- We also celebrate a time of waiting for Jesus. **What do we call this time of waiting for Jesus?** (*Advent.*)
  - Each year, we wait a long time during Advent before Christmas.
  - Advent is the beginning of the Church year.
  - **Advent** is the Church season that begins four Sundays before Christmas Day.
  - The color used at Mass to celebrate Advent is purple. Purple reminds us to make this time special by getting our hearts ready for Christmas. It is a time of preparation for Christmas, the birthday of Jesus.

**Conclusion:** Advent is a special time of prayer in preparation for Jesus' birthday. It reminds us to make time to ready our hearts for Christmas.

### FOCUS 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **Nativity diorama:** Have students color Nativity diorama while listening to Christmas music about Jesus' birth, then glue pieces into a shoebox. See Appendix B-15.
- **Advent Preparation:**  
Bring a small Christmas tree to the classroom. Each day (or as often as you wish) hand out ornaments for the students to color, cut, and hang on the tree. Before putting these on the tree, each student should write what he has done or will do to prepare for Jesus. You might write examples on the board so that the children will have something to which they can refer (help my parents, pray, clean my room, etc.). By Christmas, the tree should be full of ornaments for Jesus.
- Learn about Saint Nicholas and December 6. (See sidebars.)

### FOCUS 3 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Activity Book, pp. 38–40.
- Read about Saint Francis and the Nativity Scene. (See sidebar.)
- Read about the Wise Men and Little Christmas. (See sidebars.)
- Read about the Little Drummer Boy. (See sidebar.)

### Saint Francis and the Nativity Scene

Saint Francis was born into a wealthy family in Assisi, Umbria (present-day Italy), around the year 1181. According to a legend that dates from the fifteenth century, he was born in a stable like our Lord. As a young man he enjoyed music, fine clothes, and showy display. He soon embraced poverty and founded the Franciscan Order in 1209 by permission of Pope Innocent III. During Christmastime of 1223 the saint reproduced in a church at Greccio a manger scene, laicizing an ecclesiastical custom. He has thus come to be regarded as the person responsible for popularizing devotion to the Crib. He died on October 3, 1226. He was canonized by Gregory IX on July 16, 1228; his feast day is October 4.

### Wise Men, Not Kings

Although there is a tradition of calling the wise men kings, their proper name is Magi. Magi were a priestly caste or order of ancient Media and Persia whose religion was similar to that of Zoroaster. There is no scriptural evidence to support the wise men's kingship or that they were three in number. Some Fathers of the Church speak of three Magi, but they were very likely influenced by the number of gifts.

### Focus 3: Christmas is Jesus' birthday.

- Have the students look at the sacred art on Student Text, page 41, as you read the story of the Nativity using a children's Bible (Matthew 1:18–25 and in Luke 2:1–20).
  - Jesus was born to save the world from sin and to open the gates of Heaven.
  - Jesus had a human mother, Mary, and Jesus' father was God the Father, the First Person of the Blessed Trinity.
  - Saint Joseph was Jesus' foster father.
  - Jesus was both God and man in one Divine Person.
- Since Christmas is Jesus' birthday, we want to give Him a present.
  - *What kind of presents do you think that Jesus would like to have?* (Answers will vary.)
  - The best present we can give Jesus is a loving heart. We always want to have a loving heart.
  - *How can we give Jesus a loving heart?* (Being kind; smiling; saying we are sorry; praying; helping others; being quiet and holy at Mass.)
  - During Advent, we can prepare our hearts by doing acts of kindness and small sacrifices.
  - *If you prepare your heart with acts of kindness, how will this make you feel during Advent as you wait for the birth of Jesus?* (Happy; joyful.)

**Conclusion:** The birth of Jesus is part of God's plan for us to get to Heaven. Jesus will bless us if we give Him a loving heart.

### Review Supplemental Lesson—Liturgical Year: Advent and Christmas (3 minutes)

- We celebrate our time of waiting for Jesus during a Church season called Advent. During Advent, we are filled with joy and hope.
- We celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

### Application (10–20 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- During Advent we should prepare our hearts as we wait for Christmas. We can prepare for Jesus' birth by praying and by doing good deeds.
- Choose someone in your family that you can do something nice for each day. (They might make the person's bed or make a card saying how much they love that person.)
- *What can we do to prepare for Jesus' birth during Advent?* (Pray, do good deeds that show that we want to obey, and give up something for God.)

## Little Christmas

The Feast of the Epiphany is sometimes called “Little Christmas,” for it was on this day that the birth of the Savior was revealed to the entire world, as He had been revealed to the Jewish people on Christmas Day.

## The Little Drummer Boy

According to legend, a little drummer boy was present in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. When he saw the magnificent gifts of the Magi, he was saddened because he was poor and had no gift to bring to the Christ Child. As the Magi left, he stood alone, then softly began to play his drum for the holy Baby: pa-rum-pum-pum-pum. Walking forward and playing more loudly, he saw Jesus smile at him. With a heart full of love, he continued to play. No longer sad, the little drummer boy’s heart sang for he knew that his was the greatest gift of all, the gift of love. It is important to remember that Jesus does not want extravagant or expensive gifts, only the best a person has. Using one’s God-given talents for God’s glory will certainly make the Christ Child smile.

- Let’s take a quiet moment now to think about what our Advent promise to Jesus will be this year.
- **Have students** draw a picture of their Advent promise inside of a heart. Some students may want to share their Advent promise.

## Celebration (5–10 minutes)

*Choose one or more of the following*

- Prayer: Student Text, p. 43: Thank you, dear Jesus, for coming down from Heaven to save us. Thank You for Christmas time. Help us to get ready for Your coming this year. Amen.
- Quiet students and listen to refrain of “O Come O Come Emmanuel” in the *Adoremus Hymnal* #301. Go to [www .faithandlifefseries.com](http://www.faithandlifefseries.com) for downloadable MP3s.
- Have students focus on the Blessed Mother in the picture in Student Text, page 40, and pray the Hail Mary, Student Text, page 129.
- Remind parents that December 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (celebrating that the Blessed Mother was free from Original Sin), a Holy Day of Obligation.
- At home: Suggest that students use a diorama at home as a reminder to pray and offer acts of kindness during Advent.



## 10 The Savior Is Born

“...you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”  
Luke 2:12

One day, Mary and Joseph had to travel to **Bethlehem**. They looked and looked for a place to stay, but every inn was full and no one took them in. So they had to stay in a stable, a place where animals are kept.

This is where Jesus was born. Since Mary had no cradle for Him, she laid Him in a **manger**. A manger is a wooden box used to hold food for animals. The Son of God, our Savior, came here to earth as a poor, tiny, helpless baby.

Angels from Heaven appeared in the sky. They sang, “Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth to men of good will.”

Some **shepherds**—men who take care of sheep—saw the angels. The shepherds were afraid. “Do

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not be afraid,” said the angels. “We have good news for you and for all people. Today in Bethlehem a Savior has been born! You will find Him lying in a manger.” Then the angels left.

The shepherds were amazed. They said, “Let us go to Bethlehem and see this Child about whom the angels have spoken.”

The shepherds hurried away and found Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. They knelt down to **worship** their Savior. To worship means to give your best love and praise to God. The shepherds remembered to thank God the Father for sending us His Son.

**Christmas** is the birthday of Jesus. This is an important day because if Jesus had not come, we could not go to Heaven, ever. There would be no Christmas trees, no presents, no Christmas lights, and no Christmas songs—nothing to make you happy. But Jesus did come and we have a wonderful time every year when we celebrate His birthday.



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### Words to Know:

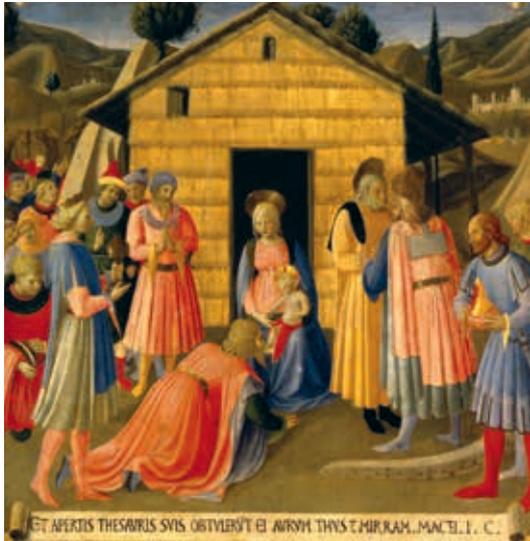
Bethlehem manger shepherds worship  
 Christmas

- Q. 24** *Where was Jesus Christ born?*  
 Jesus Christ was born in a stable in Bethlehem, and was placed in a manger (CCC 525; Lk 2:7).
- Q. 25** *Who is Jesus Christ?*  
 Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Son of God made man (CCC 454, 495).
- Q. 26** *Why did the Son of God become man?*  
 The Son of God became man to save us from sin and to regain Heaven for us (CCC 457–60).

### We Pray:

Thank You, dear Jesus, for coming down from Heaven to save us. Thank You for Christmas time. Help us to get ready for Your coming this year. *Amen.*

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## 11 Three Wise Men Arrive

“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?  
For we have seen his star in the East,  
and have come to worship him.”  
Matthew 2:2

Jesus came to save everybody. He loves the people of every part of the world and He loves them very, very much.

Three **wise men** came to Bethlehem from a far away land when Jesus was born. The wise men knew many things about God and the world He made by studying His creation. They did not get lost because they followed a star that brought them to Jesus. The wise men knew that Jesus was a great **king**. A king is someone who rules over a land. Jesus rules over all kings of the world and over the Kingdom of Heaven too. He is the King of Kings. So the wise men knelt before Jesus and gave Him gifts fit for a king. His Kingdom will never end!

Jesus was glad to see the wise men. Although He was a baby, He really was their God and King.

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Can you do what the wise men did? Can you visit Jesus and give Him gifts? Yes, you can! Jesus is always waiting for you in church. You can visit Him any time the church is open.

If you are at home you can visit Jesus, too. All you have to do is stop what you are doing and talk to Him. God is everywhere and can always hear you.

Your gift to Jesus is your love for Him. Your prayers are a gift to Him. Your good deeds are a gift to Him too. Each time you chose right over wrong, that is a gift to Jesus.



### Words to Know:

wise men      king

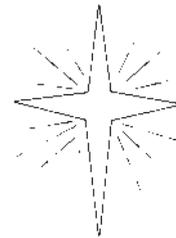
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**Q. 27** *What did the wise men do when they found Jesus?*

They knelt before Jesus and gave Him gifts (CCC 528).

**Q. 28** *Where can we go to kneel before Jesus?*

We can kneel before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament (CCC 1373, 1378).



### MORNING OFFERING

Dear Jesus, I give You my day and everything in it. Please keep me close to You, Your Mother Mary, and my guardian angel as I live today for Your glory. *Amen.*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Nativity

Color the picture and then answer the question.



Who came to see baby Jesus?

Shepherds

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Word Search

Can you find these words in the puzzle?  
Look carefully! The words go across and down.

BETHLEHEM	BIRTHDAY
MANGER	MARY
SHEPHERDS	JOSEPH
CHRISTMAS	SAVIOR
JESUS	

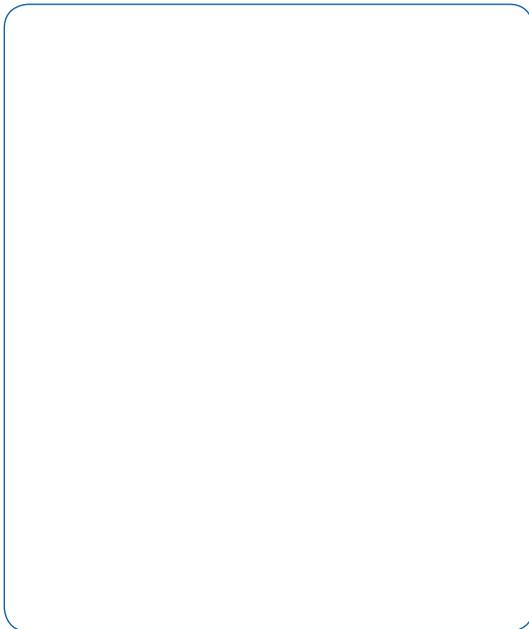
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X	S	X	X	X	H	X	X	X	O
X	B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M
X	P	X	M	A	R	Y	X	X	X
X	H	X	X	X	D	X	X	X	X
X	J	E	S	U	S	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	M	A	N	G	E	R	X

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of Santa Claus kneeling before baby Jesus.



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