

# 28 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR Christmas



**NOV  
28**

## **Make time to pray.**

Commit, individually or as a household, to a designated prayer time each day or each week. Consider exploring one of the traditional Catholic prayers each week, such as the Rosary, Lectio Divina, the Examen, or Morning or Night Prayer.

## **NOV Commit to 29 kindness.**

This time of year can be stressful and we are often our own worst enemies. Make a commitment to be kind to strangers, your family, and yourself. Remember, God so loved the world, he sent his Son! Spread the love!

## **NOV Get out the Advent wreath and light the candles.**

Don't worry if you don't have new candles or if they are the wrong color. Light a candle each evening and thank God for the light that overcomes the darkness.

## **DEC Choose life!**

**1** Donate money or items to organizations that provide services for pregnant women or families and children. Pray that all may choose life!

## **DEC Put up the 2 nativity.**

Tell the story of Jesus' birth as you work together to set up the manger scene. For extra fun, keep baby Jesus out of the crib and let the youngest member of the family place him in the manger on Christmas morning.

## **DEC Go to 5 confession.**

Clear out the clutter in your heart and mind by healing your relationship with God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## **DEC Don't forget 9 Saint Joseph.**

In honor of Saint Joseph, Patron Saint of Workers, be sure to show kindness to workers today, especially those working in retail, hospitality, public safety, and medicine.

## **DEC Pray for the 14 dead.**

This time of year can be particularly difficult for those who are grieving. Send a card or note to those who are experiencing Christmas without a loved one for the first time. Pray for those who have died and all who love them.

## **DEC Make a 10 grocery list.**

As you plan for holiday baking or your Christmas meal, add some extra items to donate to a food pantry or organization that provides meals for those in need.

## **DEC Go caroling! 15**

Spread the joy of the season by caroling at a nursing home or other care facility or in your neighborhood. Can't gather with others? Invite friends or family members to record a song and exchange videos.

## **DEC Watch a 19 movie.**

Make some popcorn and hot chocolate and settle in for a seasonal movie such as *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, or *The Nativity Story*.

## **DEC Reserve a 23 gift or two**

to open on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, or Three Kings, which celebrates the Magi paying homage to the Infant Jesus, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

## **DEC Celebrate the feasts!**

**6** Saint Nicholas (Dec. 6), Saint Juan Diego (Dec. 9), Saint Lucy (Dec. 13) and Saint John of the Cross (Dec. 14) all have feast days during Advent. Take time to learn about and celebrate these holy heroes.

## **DEC Serve others. 11**

Help a loved one put up decorations. Offer to babysit or provide respite for caregivers. Wrap gifts or shovel snow for a neighbor. Serve coffee or a meal to those who are hungry. Make a donation to a service organization.

## **DEC Pray a 16 Christmas**

**novena**, beginning on December 16 and concluding on December 24. Search the internet for the traditional Saint Andrew Christmas novena or learn about cultural celebrations such as Las Posadas or Simbang Gabi.

## **DEC Look at the 20 stars!**

The shepherds and the Magi experienced celestial events in the Nativity story. Go out and view the night sky, giving thanks for the gift of creation.

## **DEC Let heaven & 24 nature sing!**

Look for simple ways to have a more environmentally-friendly holiday. Use gift wrap that is reusable or recyclable. Avoid single-use plastics. Be conscious of energy and water use. Thank God for the gift of creation.

## **DEC Practice 3 gratitude.**

At dinner each night or just before you go to bed, make a list of 1-3 things for which you are grateful. Say a prayer of thanksgiving.

## **DEC Make space. 4**

Take time to clean up, clean out, and declutter your home. Donate items that you no longer need, but others could use.

## **DEC Be still. 7**

Find time to be still and silent, even if it is just five minutes. Ponder God's great love for you.

## **DEC Celebrate 8 Mary!**

Take time to honor Mary on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8), the Feast of Our Lady of Loreto (Dec. 11), or the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Dec. 12).

## **DEC Take a hike! 12**

Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem. The Wise Men journeyed to find the Baby Jesus. Get outdoors and reflect on your own walk toward God.

## **DEC Recall that 13 Jesus is the Light of the world!**

Enjoy dinner by candlelight. Take a drive to see Christmas lights. Remember that Jesus is the light that overcomes the darkness.

## **DEC O Come, O Come 17 Emmanuel!**

The O Antiphons, used during evening prayer, begin on December 17. Sing the appropriate verse of the Advent carol each night this week.

## **DEC Thank service 18 providers.**

Leave pre-packaged snacks or beverages for mail carriers and delivery people.

## **DEC On the 21 longest night,**

reach out to those experiencing depression, anxiety, or otherwise struggling during this season. Offer a prayer for those who need comfort and healing.

## **DEC Bake 22 cookies.**

Consider taking sweet treats to homeless shelters, food pantries, or other organizations that serve those in poverty. (Check food donation policies first!)

## **DEC Joy to the world! 25**

Put on some music. Prepare a feast. Rejoice! God is with us! Come, let us adore him.

