

advent 2019

GATHER AROUND EVERY DAY THIS MONTH TO READ THE STORY OF HOW GOD SENT JOY TO THE WORLD WITH THE GIFT OF HIS SON, JESUS. WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, SPREAD SOME JOY OF YOUR OWN AS A FAMILY!



<p>01</p> <p>A young couple, Mary and Joseph, get engaged.</p> <p>Have each person in your family share their definition of the word joy.</p>	<p>02</p> <p>One day, God sends the angel Gabriel to Mary. He has some very special news!</p> <p>Name something that starts with a J, O, then Y that brings you joy.</p>	<p>03</p> <p>Mary is greatly troubled when she hears the angel's greeting.</p> <p>Bring JOY to a family in need by gathering your gently-used coats and gloves to drop off at a charity.</p>	<p>04</p> <p>Gabriel responds to Mary: "Don't be afraid; God is very happy with you!"</p> <p>Share your favorite jokes or hilarious YouTube videos with each other.</p>	<p>05</p> <p>Gabriel tells Mary the special news: She will have a baby boy, and He will be named Jesus.</p> <p>Serving together not only helps others but is life-giving to your family. Choose one way you can volunteer your time as a family this month.</p>
<p>06</p> <p>Gabriel shares more details of God's plan with Mary: "Jesus will be great and will be called God's very own son!"</p> <p>Create some family joy by turning on your favorite Christmas music and having a dance party.</p>	<p>07</p> <p>Mary doesn't understand how she can have a baby without being married, but the angel Gabriel assures her of a great truth: Nothing is impossible with God.</p> <p>Use your talents (whatever they are) to create something that represents the story of the birth of Jesus—like a Christmas ornament, a painting, a rap, a short play.</p>	<p>08</p> <p>"I serve God with my life and want all that you have said to happen," Mary tells the angel, and he leaves.</p> <p>Too much technology can steal your joy. So turn it off for an undistracted evening together. Bake Christmas cookies, talk about your favorite Christmas memory, or plan a Christmas surprise for another family.</p>	<p>09</p> <p>Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth and is so overwhelmed with God's goodness that she sings a song of praise.</p> <p>Snuggle up and watch your favorite Christmas movie together.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Caesar Augustus wants to know how many people are in his empire, so he tells all the people to go back to their hometown to be registered and counted.</p> <p>Declutter and give away no longer used items, like clothes that don't fit or toys that are no longer played with, to a local charity.</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Joseph takes Mary, who is pregnant, to his hometown of Bethlehem to be counted.</p> <p>Google search Christmas traditions around the world and have your family vote on a new one to adopt.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>While Joseph and Mary are in Bethlehem, the time comes for the baby to be born.</p> <p>Invite a few of your favorite people over for dessert or a game night.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Mary gives birth to Jesus, wraps Him in swaddling cloths, and lays Him in a manger because there is no room for them anywhere else.</p> <p>Give the joy of reading by collecting gently-used books and dropping them off at your local Goodwill or public library.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>At night in a nearby field, shepherds are watching their flocks.</p> <p>Complaining is the opposite of joy. This week, every time you complain, follow it up by saying one thing you're thankful for.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>The sky lights up—God has sent an angel to the shepherds to tell them the good news.</p> <p>Have everyone answer—the most joyful person I know is _____ . Discuss why you think so.</p>
<p>16</p> <p>When the shepherds see the angel, they're afraid!</p> <p>Take your smile everywhere you go today. Even a simple smile can bring joy to someone having a rough day.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>The angel tries to calm the shepherds: "Don't be afraid—I bring wonderful news that will bring joy to all of the world!"</p> <p>Bring joy to your neighbors by leaving a small, gift or goody on a few doorsteps with an encouraging note.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>"A Savior—the Rescuer you have been waiting for is born today!" the angel proclaims to the shepherds.</p> <p>See how many compliments each of you can give to brighten someone else's day today.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>The angel explains that the shepherds will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.</p> <p>Discuss: "How can we be joyful when we feel unhappy?"</p>	<p>20</p> <p>More angels come to celebrate the good news—they arrive at the shepherd's field and begin praising God!</p> <p>Declare today (as much as possible) an "off day." Stay in pajamas. Leave the dishes in the sink. Put off the wrapping one more evening.</p>
<p>21</p> <p>The shepherds leave their flocks and hurry to find Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who is lying in a manger.</p> <p>Have each person share the most joyful part of their day today.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>After they see the baby, the shepherds excitedly go and tell everyone they run into the good news!</p> <p>Write a note or card thanking someone who has brought you joy recently.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>The shepherds return to their flocks, praising God for all they had seen and heard.</p> <p>Christmas decorations bring holiday joy! Take a drive or walk around your community and enjoy the bright, beautiful colors.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Mary names the baby Jesus just as the angel had told her to do.</p> <p>Pull out old family albums or scroll through old Christmas pictures. Tell stories of your favorite Christmases and memories.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>God has sent His Son to rescue us because He loves us so very much!</p> <p>Read the story of Jesus' birth from Luke 1:26-2:21 and remember the greatest joy of all—hope in our Savior, Jesus!</p>