

Making **Jesus** Part of your Christmas Celebrations



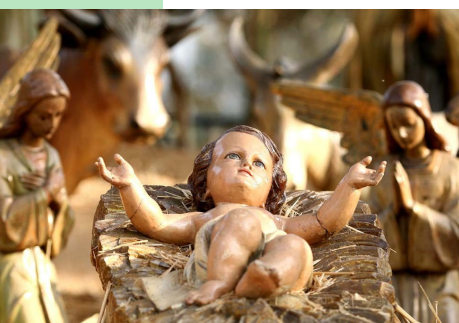
- **Go to Mass.** Invite friends, relatives, and neighbors to join you. Christmas Eve or Christmas Day – whatever works.
- **Read the Christmas story** (one version [Luke 2:1-20](#)). Kids enjoy doing their own Christmas pageant or processing with pieces from your crèche and candles. If you've hidden Baby Jesus, bring him out and place him in the manger! If Christmas morning is crazy, do this Christmas Eve, – **making Jesus primary**. Sing him a lullaby before you go to bed.



- After the Christmas story or grace before a meal, pass around or file by **an image of Baby Jesus, giving him a kiss** to show your love and gratitude. Sing *O Come All Ye Faithful*.
- An old Irish tradition is to **place a lit candle in the largest window** all through Christmas Eve to welcome Mary and Joseph.



- **Have a Christmas [carol sing-along](#)** around the tree. **Include religious carols in** your background music **playlist**.
- **Dress up** for Mass and dinner – Jesus, the long-awaited Guest, is coming to your house today! **Trim the dining room table**, use your best china.
- **Start your gift exchange thanking God**, especially for the gift of Jesus. Give Jesus the “first gift” – your family’s Advent efforts, recalled simply or [presented symbolically](#). Live the exchange with joy and gratitude. Take turns. Teach children to say “thank you.”



- **Make a [birthday cake for Jesus](#)** and sing “Happy Birthday” to him.
- **Light a fire in the fireplace, sip some cocoa, and snuggle on the couch for a classic Christmas movie.** [This list of favorites](#) also provides ideas for family conversation to continue the “cozy!”

Bake a loaf of Christmas bread and share it at your meal. (Bake Grandma’s recipe with her or via Face-time.) **A beautiful Polish tradition** is the breaking and sharing of a **Communion-like-wafer called *oplatki***. Read about this [ritual](#), maybe order your own [oplatki](#). This can be a graced and memorable **link to the Eucharist at your table, which will enrich your family’s celebration at gathered Mass:** a tangible experience of thanksgiving, unity, reconciliation, and nourishment.

Remember that **Christmas is a whole season!** [Click here](#) for ideas on how to celebrate it Catholic-style: December 24-January 8th.

*Don't stop now, after four weeks of **preparing**, the **celebrating** has just begun!*

