

Celebrating Christmas

We celebrate Jesus' birth on December 25, the Feast of the Nativity. This is such an important event that we celebrate it during the entire Christmas season.

This season, which follows the Advent season, begins with the celebration of Mass on Christmas Eve. It includes the Feasts of the Holy Family and the Epiphany and ends with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. While Christmas is one of the shortest seasons in the liturgical year, it is one of the most joyful.

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.



Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus. Help us celebrate his birth with joy and thanksgiving.

We Share Christ's Light During Christmas



During Christmas we celebrate Jesus' birth and thank God for giving us the Light of the World. One way to thank God for this great gift is to share Christ's light with others. We do this by following Jesus' new commandment and practicing the Beatitudes. What can you do to share Christ's light with others?

The Bread of Life

Another title for Jesus is "the Bread of Life." He satisfies our hunger for love, forgiveness, nourishment, and strength. When we accept and welcome the Bread of Life into our lives, we agree to share with others everything Jesus has shared with us.

Share with Others

Write how you can share with others what Jesus, the Bread of Life, has shared with you.



Reading God's Word

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."

John 6:35



Mass During Christmas

When we go to Mass during Christmas, we see a white cloth on the altar, and the priest wears white or gold vestments. White, the liturgical color of the season, reminds us of the purity and joy of Jesus' birth. We often see a Nativity scene with baby Jesus in the manger, and with Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and the Magi.



What We Experience

The readings we hear are about how God's people waited with great hope for the coming of his Son and about how Jesus' birth fulfilled those hopes. The carols and hymns inspire us to do what is right and to live as Jesus wants us to live. The songs often have words about the peace that Jesus' birth brings to the world.



Peace in Hymns and Carols

Write a new verse for a Christmas hymn or carol that speaks of peace.



Did You Know?

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

GO TO
PAGE
243



Faith Summary

We can joyfully celebrate Jesus' birth during the Christmas season by sharing his light with others. The songs that we sing at Mass during Christmas remind us of the peace that Jesus' birth brings to the world.

Ways of Being Like Jesus

Jesus shares God's love with us.
Share God's love with others by sharing a sign of peace with your family members.



Prayer

Dear God, thank you for giving us the wonderful gift of your Son, Jesus. Teach us how to share your generosity with others.



With My Family

Activity Make a loaf of bread together. Send it, along with a note, to a family member you will not get a chance to see during the Christmas season.

Faith on the Go Ask one another: *What is one way you can be bread for others during the Christmas season?*

Family Prayer *Thank you, God, for sending us your Son. May we show our thankfulness for this gift in how we treat others.*