

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE  
**At Home with Faith**

**Advent provides us an opportunity to focus on what is most important** during a time when we can otherwise be overwhelmed by expectations to do too much too fast.



Photo: Adobe Stock

# Read

Take time to read and reflect on the Scriptures for this day.

**Don't have access to a Bible?**

Visit [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings) or download an app such as *Laudate* or *iBreviary* to access the Mass readings.

Every Advent season presents a new the challenge of following Jesus' command to "beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life." Here, Jesus wants us to keep our hearts focused on God, rather than material distractions. It's as if Jesus anticipated how this time of year tempts us to forget what Christmas is really all about.

Let's resolve as a family to use this Advent season as Jesus intends: to remember that Jesus will return soon and to watch for him intently. This opens our hearts to the holy Spirit who then comes to meet us.

**Jeremiah 33:14-16**

I will fulfill the promise I made to Israel!

**Psalms 25**

Make your ways known to me.

**1 Thessalonians**

Conduct yourselves to please God.

**Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36**

Do not become drowsy from the anxieties of daily life.

# At Home with Faith

## Talk

Here are some reflection questions to help you have **Great Conversations** with the whole family.

Ways to make Advent more joyful and faithful:

- **Ask your child/children “What do you look forward to most about Christmas?”** Let your children share what they look forward to on Christmas day. What makes that day special to them. There may be some things that surprise you.
- **Tell your children about Advent:** a time of year when we look forward to Jesus’ return and open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. This hopeful waiting prepares us to enjoy Christmas more too.
- **Ask your child/children “What do you like most about the time before Christmas?”** Discover what traditions or experiences from Advents before have stuck in your children’s memory. Maybe they really enjoy the decorations? Maybe they enjoy a particular event or activity that you hadn’t realized was so important to them. Use this as an opportunity to share your favorite things about this time of year.
- **Adapt your celebrations:** Use what you have learned to reprioritize how you use your own time in Advent. Maybe there are some traditions or activities that you have done every year that don’t bear much fruit. Not only is it OK to dispense with these, it will free more time for you to do what matters most, be more present to God and your family.



**“The tensions created by an overly individualistic culture, caught up with possessions and pleasures, leads to intolerance and hostility in families”. Here I would also include today’s fast pace of life, stress and the organization of society and labour, since all these are cultural factors which militate against permanent decisions.”**

### Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love) #33

Pope Francis often warns us about the spiritual dangers we face when we become preoccupied with possessions and the material pleasures that our modern economy provides. This warning sounds so much like Jesus’ warning to look for his return rather than distract ourselves by seeking material comfort and pleasure.

Let’s help our families make the most of this beautiful Advent season by learning about the moments that have brought them a deeper sense of connection with the holy Spirit and with one another. Then, as a family, let’s commit to let go of the less important things so we dedicate attention to those most life-giving activities.

Check out Archbishop Etienne’s weekly reflections on Advent and other resources on the [Advent: Draw Near to Christ webpage](#).

Check out [Northwest Catholic’s feature on Christmas traditions](#) to find ways to bring Jesus into Christmas.

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For more on the Year of the Family, visit <https://archseattle.org/yof>

**For more resources, visit us online at:**

<https://marriagefamilylife.seattlearchdiocese.org/athomewithfaith>