



Sunday Gospel Background

The beginning of Advent is also the beginning of the Church's year, or the Liturgical Year. In the Gospel, Jesus tells of a man who leaves his servants in charge while he travels. Jesus reminds us to follow his way and do all we are called to do as we wait for him to come again. We might compare it to household chores or homework. If we leave things to the last minute, we might be caught off guard. Some people even make "spiritual New Year's resolutions," to follow Jesus' teachings more faithfully and not put them off.

Share Experiences

Check off the boxes as you complete each part of the lesson.

- Pray together** (If you have an Advent wreath, light the first violet candle. If you don't have an Advent wreath, any candle will do.) "Loving God, you sent Jesus to live with us as our brother. We are getting ready to celebrate his birth among us at Christmas. Help us to live more like him by turning to you in prayer and by loving and caring for others. Amen."
- Cover Activity • What Will Your Advent Be Like? (page 1)** You might want to play some Christmas carols as soft background music as your child quietly completes this meditative activity. Note that the activity doesn't ask your child to write a resolution, but suggests coloring the letters one by one.
- Play-Drama • Show Us the Way Home (pages 2-4)** This play imagines the experiences of a family that was part of the Babylonian Exile. Turn to the map on page 5, and identify the Persian Gulf and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Show your child where Babylon was, where Jerusalem is, and the kind of terrain that lay between them. Note: You may choose to read aloud this entire page as background to prepare for reading the play.

This play has several parts, so you may wish to simply take turns reading them, or assign additional family members, if available. Read through the play once or twice to familiarize your child with the parts; then act it out using the creative movements suggested and any props you want to add. Empty boxes could be the "wall," a sturdy candleholder can serve as the menorah, and stuffed or plastic animals can be the wild animals.

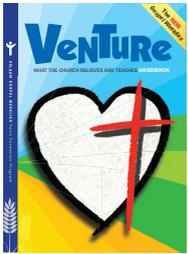
- Discuss the Think questions at the top of page 4.** *Answers: 1. It is their homeland; they want descendants to know where they are from; they don't have a temple in Babylon. Simon and Leah have made a home in Babylon; they are happy there. 2. They like their Babylonian friends, toys, and culture. They know little about their homeland and ancestors in faith; they are becoming more like Babylonian children. 3. The Jewish faith won't survive unless the younger generations move back to Jerusalem, worship at the Temple, and learn the stories of their faith.*

Discover Gospel and Doctrine

- Sunday Gospel • Jesus Urges Us to Be Ready (page 4)** Share about a time you put something off and how you felt about it. Invite your child to share similar experiences. Explain that Jesus tells a story like this in Sunday's Gospel. Proclaim the Gospel by reading the parts of Narrator, Jesus, and Traveler together with your child.
- Discuss the Think questions on page 4.** Use the questions to help your child recognize that Jesus wants us to be ready for his coming by living as he has shown us. *Answers: 1-2. Jesus is the traveler, who will return without warning, so we need to be ready at all times. 3. We can be ready by living our lives as Jesus did—caring for the least among us, doing the Works of Mercy, keeping God's commandments.*



- Connecting Gospel and Doctrine • Advent Celebrates the Incarnation (page 4)** Read this summary of the mystery of the Incarnation. Discuss the *Think* questions that go with it. *Answers: 1. Open-ended. 2. Through prayer, by attending Mass regularly, by showing our gratitude to those who help us, by offering help to those who need us; open-ended.*



- Open the *What the Church Believes and Teaches* handbook to page 16.** Begin by pointing out the various calendars and planners your family uses. Read aloud the paragraphs on page 16 together. Talk about the importance of Sunday worship. If your family has difficulties getting to church on Sunday, brainstorm ways to get around those challenges.

Turn to page 17. You can find the 2021 dates for feast days listed in the first column by going to usccb.org/events. Invite your child to make note of these feasts on your family calendar.

Once you have completed this section of the lesson, close the handbook and return to Venture, page 4.

- Catholic Faith Word • Advent (page 4)** Read the definition aloud to emphasize the significance of this Church season.
- Our Catholic Faith • Isaiah Tells Us to Get Ready (page 5)** If you have not already read this, invite your child to read the page silently.

Live the Gospel

- Advent Calendar (page 7)** Give your child a moment to examine the illustration. Suggest that your child put the calendar someplace visible in your home so that everyone can do the activities each day. There is room for initials as a way of keeping track.
- Saints • Saint Jane Frances de Chantal (page 8)** Read about Saint Jane, a woman who rose up to answer the needs of her time. Encourage your child to learn more about her. Her decision to leave her wealth behind to care for the poor and suffering is a good follow up to last week's Works of Mercy lesson.
- Closing Prayer • Advent Prayer Service (page 6)** Many Catholic parishes make an effort to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation available for families during Advent. This prayer service can serve as a preparation. Divide the parts between you. As always, feel free to invite other family members to join the prayer. (Later on, read the quote from Saint Paul VI. Talk about what it means to you that Christ is with us in the Blessed Sacrament.)



Parent Resources

For weekly videos, assessments, and more, scan this code or go to pflaumweeklies.com/family
Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings to read this Sunday's Scripture