Family Conversations

Here is a guide to assist your family in talking about the Sunday readings. Keep these cards handy wherever they are most likely to be seen and used before and after church. Examine the readings (or the homily) for images or vocabulary that trigger reactions. What’s important is that you have the chat together. Follow your conversations wherever they might lead.

Key to the Conversations

- Key Idea: Reflection on a central idea in the readings
- Take 30 (Seconds): A pause to reflect or pray in silence
- Share: A time for each family member to share
- Pray: A suggested moment for prayer

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Take a few moments each week as a family to read, reflect upon, and talk about the Sunday readings. Keep these materials in an easily accessed place, perhaps on your dining room table, in the car, or on your bedside table. Use the following reflections to start a family conversation centered around God’s Word. Encourage family members to share other questions or comments in the conversations. Keep these materials in an easily accessible place. Adapt to your changing family needs.

Year C

Advent/Christmas 2009
Commercialism of the season. "Be vigilant at all times and pray," as indicated.) Let us pray for those in need during Advent. In a season marked by excesses of this Advent season? How can you prepare for the joyfully anticipate and prepare others for the coming of the Word made flesh.

First Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2009

Jer 33:14-16; 1 Thes 3:12-4:2; Lk 21:25-28, 34:36

Gospel Highlight: Lk 21:36—“Be vigilant at all times and pray.”

Key Idea: We have heard it said that Advent is a time to be watchful and alert. In the coming weeks the Advent readings will echo the theme of watchfulness and vigilance. As we prepare to celebrate the Incarnation, a central mystery of the Christian faith, the Word of God calls us to vigilant watching and prayer. This Advent spirit of prayerful anticipation prepares the soil of our hearts and minds to receive the coming Word of God made flesh. Living in watchfulness and prayer during Advent may be a challenge, given the hectic pace and commercialism of the season.

Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2009

Bar 5:1-9; Phil 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6

Gospel Highlight: Lk 3:4—“A voice of one crying out in the desert: / Prepare the way of the Lord, / make straight his paths.”

Key Idea: In anticipating the celebration of momentous events—such as the birth of a child, a wedding, or a special birthday or anniversary—we often go to great lengths to make adequate preparations. As we continue our Advent journey, we are reminded of one biblical figure whose entire life was spent in preparing the way of the Lord. He is John the Baptist, who even in his mother’s womb rejoiced in the coming of the Lord, and who prepared hearts and minds for his coming into the world. John the Baptist is the perfect saint for Advent. He reminds us that, through our daily thoughts, words, and actions, we too prepare the way of the Lord for others. This Advent saint invites us to take 30 (seconds): Reflect or pray in silence.

Share: Who in your parish, neighborhood, or community needs a helping hand, an encouraging word, or some other thoughtful outreach during this Advent season? How can you prepare for the way of the Lord this Advent by being attentive to those in need? Name one person in your family, workplace, neighborhood, or faith community who nurtures your awareness of the presence of the Lord in the ordinary circumstances of life.

Pray: (Repeat each phrase after the leader.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. / Those who sow in tears shall reap rejoicing. / Although they go forth weeping, they shall come back rejoicing. / The Lord has done great things for us, we are glad indeed (see Ps 126:3, 6a, 6c, 3).