



Home Rituals — Ideas for your family

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St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

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Home Rituals: Arts and Music

- When a Calendar does more than Keep Time
- Cooking is both and Art and a Craft—What special treats do you make for Advent/Christmas
- Music is a big part of the season—What sounds and songs echo through your home

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Home Rituals: Arts and Music

It's more than Arts and Crafts, it really is a way in which our faith grows deeper in our souls.

The seeds of our faith are often found in music and in art. As children we learned many a bible or saint story from the stained glass windows at church or the statues that adorned our sacred spaces. There seemed to be something both tangible and permanent in the art that filled our visual spaces.

And yet, if we were to think about it, it's not just art that makes our church worship special, it's all the music as well. We may think of music

as more temporary and ephemeral but I tell you we can all remember the various hymns and songs that filled our lives, especially during a time like Advent and Christmas.

Again we have the opportunity to take what we have seen at church, adapt it, and make it a part of our homes. Most of us have a little manger set that does more than replicate what is at church. It is our chance to "tell the story" to our children, to make our faith history personal, and is a chance for our children to participate more fully in our liturgical life.

Take for example the [Green Advent Calendar](#) from the Jesuits and Friends of Britain. It proposes activities aimed at "putting faith into practice" while making it also a part of the Advent season. For some middle schoolers it might be an avenue into church encyclicals like *Laudato Si'*, very much a teachable moment for all. (Download the calendar [here](#).) This insertion of faith into daily life, especially with activities that children can do, is of course a great teaching opportunity.



How can your gifts help God's creation? Day fifteen of the advent calendar opens up new avenues of imagination that fit with our Catholic Social Teaching. Imagine the creation stories from the perspective of us helping God care for creation. (Genesis 2:18-20)

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Finding God in All Things

Our Sunday, 10 a.m. liturgy is online either live on Facebook (link at loyoladenver.org) or recorded and linked under "Video Resources"



[Download a printable nativity set.](#) It may not be what you have put under the Christmas tree, but it would certainly be great for a child to keep in their bedroom. A little bit of play acting, a little bit of story-telling and the real meaning of Christmas gets reinforced. Throw in a few tunes for the children to learn and you've got a lot of what seemed to make Christmas special at church, right in your own home.

Making it tangible

Educators know how important it is to make learning tangible. So too it is important for our faith to become tangible. That includes both the power of the arts combined with the necessity of active participation. So at church we often stand, sing, gesture and pray out loud.

The Ignatian tradition of prayer (contemplation) often calls for us to engage all the senses. Some of this is our imagination but some is our use of environment and activity. This includes everything from music, works of art, nature, posture and bodily movement.

It is not just abstract thought in an intellectual sphere. So too the formation of our children in faith. We need to find ways for them to be able to bodily express the faith they are learning. It isn't just Arts and Crafts for the sake of activity, It is using Art and Music and skill to make faith tangible, appealing and memorable.

We know how difficult it is to be creative and engaging especially during a pandemic. Yet we also know how important it is. So we offer you a list of activities for you to consider. Many have printable pictures or simple craft instructions.

Still, the most important part is not the craft but the story that is learned through the activity. And how this is best accomplished within the family context. So as you look through the lists and activities, consider where you can make faith tangible by the story you tell and the examples you share.

[Advent Activities for All](#)
(Loyola Press)

[Advent Catholic Prayers & Advent Activities for Kids](#)
(Sadlier Press)

[Advent and Christmas Crafts and Activities for Kids](#) (Catholic Icing)

[The Big Bad Post of Advent Ideas for Catholic Families](#)
(Catholic Sprouts)

[Using Advent Crafts to Teach Your Children the Faith](#) (Ascension Press)

And any number of Christmas skits, musicals and carols. My favorite is still a touching lullaby written by Sally DeFord, [Guard Him Joseph](#). Always puts me in the Christmas mood.

