

Take Time this Advent Season

Timeto count

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent Luke 1:26

Advent is a counting time. During advent we are counting time. You can count lots of things like counting God's blessings each day of advent.

Time to count down to Christmas with a chain or advent wreath

Time... to look forward

You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice. Luke 1:14

Even though Christmas is a few weeks away there's already a lot to look forward to. We look forward to Jesus' birth. We also look forward to when Jesus will come again. Do you think it will look like a big Christmas?

Look forward to Christmas programs, parties, decorating

Time...to look back

God remembered his mercy, the promise he made to our ancestors Luke 1:54-55

We can look back to God's promises. We look back to our own relatives.

Remember the people who have come before you

Time...to wait

The people were waiting and wondering what was taking so long. Luke 1:21

Waiting can be hard. Ask your mother what it was like waiting for you to be born. Or think of another time when waiting was worth it.

Think of a time you've had to wait, like waiting for a ride at Disneyland; waiting for a vacation, remember that waiting is worth it

Time...to watch

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord Luke 1:17

Jesus told us to be ready. It's a time to watch for ways to help others as Jesus did.

Watch for opportunities to thank others for things they do for you

Time....to do

When Joseph awoke from sleep he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him.

Matthew 1:24

It's easy to put off things. Things like shopping or card writing or cleaning your room. Mary and Joseph had to do what God wanted them to do, they didn't wait. They did what had to be done.

Think about something you haven't done yet that you need to do, like putting something away, cleaning something

Time...to follow

The star that the wise men had seen in the east went on ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. Matthew 2:9

Who are the people who are leading you to find Jesus? To listen to God's Word?

The wise men followed a star to find Jesus; some tribesmen follow an elder; who do you follow?

Time...to practice

According to the custom of the priests, Zechariah had been chosen to go into the Lord's temple and burn incense, while the people stood outside praying. Luke 19:30

Zechariah had to practice to be able to do as he was asked. What are things that Jesus taught that you could practice and get better at? What are things your parents taught you that you can practice to get better? Joseph had lots of years of practice to be a carpenter.

To get better at something you need to practice. Sometimes it's schools things and sometimes it's sports. Practice something to get better

Time...to give

Opening their treasure chests, the wise men offered the child gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Matthew 2:11

We give because we have received so very much! What do you have to give?

Not everyone is as fortunate as you. Give to those who are less fortunate (money to the bell ringers, money to church)

Time...to plan

**God has shown the mercy promised in our ancestors, and has remembered his hold covenant.
Like 1:72**

Most things don't just happen, they are planned. Have you ever thought about all the planning God had to do to get ready for the first Christmas? Making plans, make things happen.

Take time to plan a skit

Time...to sing

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts, praising God Luke 2:13

The Christmas season is full of singing isn't it?

Sing your favorite Christmas song

Time...to decorate

The glory of the Lord shone around them. Luke 2:9

Look around the world at all of God's decorations.

Help put out decorations or hang ornaments on your tree

Time...to greet

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, her baby moved within her. Luke 1:41

One way people greet people far away is by sending cards. Can you line up the cards that come into your house to display them?

Sending Christmas greetings is a way to focus on others. Send a Christmas greeting to someone.

Time...to help

God had lifted up the lowly and filled the hungry with good things Luke 1:52-53

Can you help some in need? Someone in your school? Someone in your neighborhood? Someone in your home?

Help do a job around the house

Time...to worship

Where is the child born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. Matthew 2:2

What does it mean to worship? What things do people do when they go to church?

Go to church and sing, pray and listen to words about God

Time...to cook

God gives the hungry good things to eat Luke 1:53

What is your favorite Christmas food?

Make something good to eat

Time...to clean

You will go ahead of the Lord to get everything ready for him. You will tell his people that they can be saved when their sins are forgiven. Luke 1:76-77

Cleaning can be a pain, can't it? But cleanliness is important. Cleaning can be a way of thanking God for all the things you have used over the year.

Clean out things you no longer need and give them away to someone who can use them

Time...to listen

I am Gabriel, I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. Luke 1:19

During advent you hear special things;

Listen to Christmas music on the radio, listen to someone reading you a Christmas story

Time...to travel

Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Mary was engaged to Joseph and traveled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon to have a baby. Luke 2:4-5

Just like Mary and Joseph many people travel at Christmastime. Maybe it's to a far away place or maybe to dinner. People had to make room for them. Sometimes we make room for company.

It's nice to have company or to go somewhere. Can you make room for others?

Time...to hug

Elizabeth said to Mary. Why should the mother of my Lord come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting my baby became happy and moved within me. Luke 1 43:44

When Mary went visit Elizabeth, do you suppose they hugged one another? Both were expecting babies and both were happy. I'll bet they hugged each other.

Give a hug to each person in your family

Time...to praise

The Holy Spirit came upon Zechariah and he began to speak. "Praise the Lord, the God of Israel! He has come to save his people." Luke 1:67-68

Praising takes place in church of course but it can take place other places as well.

Praise means to say something good about someone. Tell each person in your family something that you like about them.

Time...to believe

Elizabeth said to Mary, "The Lord has blessed you because you believe that he will keep his promise." Luke 1:49

Mary believed; Joseph believed; the shepherds believed; the wise men believed; the angels believed. Now it's your turn to believe. Why do we celebrate Christmas?

Time...to look

The shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." Luke 2:15

There is so much to see this time of year. The shepherds looked for a baby in a manger.

Take time to look at all the pretty decorations at Christmas and enjoy them all.

Time...to wonder

All who heard the message were amazed at what the shepherds told them. Luke 2:18

Do you know what it mean to wonder? Not to know but to anticipate. Think of all the things you are wondering about – like what presents you might get.

Time...to pray

The Lord has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Luke 1:48

We should pray every day. Maybe you could take some time listening to Christmas carols and discovering how many of them are prayers.

Do you remember to pray during the holidays? Is there anything you want to thank God for? Is there anything you want to ask for or say you are sorry for?

Time...to remember

Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:19

It's good to take the time to remember as much as you can about this special time of the year. Can you remember the Christmas story? Can you remember other Christmases?

This is a time to remember other Christmases. What do you remember?

Time ...to thank

Do you remember to thank God for sending Jesus? Do you thank others?

Do you write thank you notes? Do you remember to thank people for things they give you?

Time...to tell

When the shepherds saw the child lying in a manger, they made known what had been told them about the child. Luke 2:17

Read someone a book, send someone a card, take part in a program, play a CD, sing, display a manger scene—all of these are telling others about Jesus.

Time to tell others what Christmas is all about.

Time...to journey on

Joseph got up and took the child and his mother. Matthew 2:14 and 21 The story doesn't end with Christmas. Mary and Joseph had to continue to do their job of raising a baby. Continue your journey by remember the true meaning of Christmas after it's over.