



From the First Presidency

# Getting Ready for Christmas

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As an old tradition, our family has always celebrated the **Advent** of Christmas.

Starting on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, we would get together on Sunday afternoons, light wax candles on a pine Advent wreath, enjoy delicious homemade cookies, and read passages of scriptures that center on the Christ.

We read accounts of ancient prophets who yearned for the coming of the Messiah. We read scriptures that proclaim the wondrous story of His birth. Each week by singing beautiful Christmas songs and having a fun time together, our family tried to refocus on the true meaning of the season.

The word **Advent** means “the coming of Christ.” In Germany, where President Uchtdorf grew up, many families celebrate Advent for four weeks before Christmas.

I must admit that delicious hot chocolate, hot apple cider, and tasty homemade cookies helped a lot to catch the joyful feeling of the Christmas season!

While celebrating the Advent of Christmas is not part of all cultures around the globe, there is something we can learn from this widespread Christian tradition. Perhaps even this year we might carve from our busy schedules some time to study and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas—personally and as families.

When we prepare for Christmas by pondering its real meaning, we prepare to experience the Christ and His message. May I suggest three things we may want to study, ponder, and apply in this season of preparation.

**First, REJOICE** in the birth of our Savior.

**Second, PONDER** His influence in our lives today.

**Third, LOOK** steadfastly for His coming.

I pray that each and every one of you will have a wonderful and merry Christmas season. ♦

*From “Seeing Christmas through New Eyes,” 2010 First Presidency Christmas Devotional, (December 5, 2010).*





## REMEMBERING CHRIST

President Uchtdorf's family used a pine wreath as part of their holiday tradition. You can make a wreath to help you remember what you learn about Jesus Christ this Christmas season. Cut the center out of a paper plate, turn it upside-down, and paint it green. Cut simple candle shapes out of colored cardstock. Fold about a half inch at the bottom of the candles. Choose some scripture stories about Jesus Christ to read as a family throughout the month. As you read each story, glue a candle to the wreath.



### HERE ARE SOME SCRIPTURE STORIES TO GET STARTED:

- Jesus is born. (Luke 2:1–21)
- Jesus calms the storm. (Mark 4:35–39)
- Jesus feeds five thousand people. (Matthew 14:13–21)
- Jesus teaches about the good Samaritan. (Luke 10:25–37)
- Jesus heals the ten lepers. (Luke 17:11–19)
- Jesus atones for our sins in Gethsemane. (Luke 22:41–45)
- Jesus appears to the Nephites in the Americas after His Resurrection. (3 Nephi 11:8–17)
- Jesus teaches the Nephites about the sacrament. (3 Nephi 18:1–12)

## Rejoice, Ponder, and Look Forward



**President Uchtdorf said we should rejoice in Jesus's birth, ponder His influence in our lives, and look forward to His coming. How would you finish the sentences below?**



### REJOICE:

"Knowing about Jesus Christ makes me happy because . . ."



### PONDER:

"When I remember what Jesus has done for me, I know that I can . . ."



### LOOK FORWARD:

"I can look forward for the time when Jesus will come again by . . ."