



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

The Light of the World

Jesus is the "Light of the World" (Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). The birth of the Christ child fulfilled Isaiah's ancient prophecy: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom, a light has shone" (Is 9:1).

He was born during the night watch (Lk 2:8), at midnight, when it was pitch black outside, the time when the darkness was the deepest and most intense. On that first Christmas night, the light shined in the darkness (Jn 1:5a) and the glory of the Lord shone (Lk 2:9).

Since that day, the darkness has not overcome it (Jn 1:5b), and the Light of the World offers light to everyone (Jn 1:9). The Son of God shines like the sun; he is the "sun of justice" who brings "healing rays" (Mal 3:20).

Light is a rich symbol with many meanings. It can represent holiness, purity, glory, enlightenment, comfort, and joy, among many other things. It's not surprising, then, that God reveals himself to us as THE light.

St. Lucy, a Light-Bearer

December 13th is the feast of St. Lucy. The name Lucy comes from the Latin word *lux* (light). Lucy lived when it was illegal to be a Christian. She lost her life because of her faith in Christ, and soon after, legends of her bravery began to crop up. Legend has it that St. Lucy delivered wheat and bread to the poor and to the Christians hiding in the catacombs. To avoid being caught, she would deliver to them at night. Therefore, she would carry a lamp or wear a crown of candles to light her way and free her hands to carry food. Because of this, the lamp and wreath of candles are symbols of St. Lucy. These remind us of the Light of Christ and show St. Lucy as a light-bearer. She is an example to us of how we can use our time, talents, and treasure to carry the light of Christ to others every day. Lucy is also the Patron saint of Eyes. Pray through Lucy's intercession for relief of eye problems and for the ability to "see" Christ more clearly in your life. We can see because of the light; like the blind man in scripture, pray "Lord, I want to see."

Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline. Allow the Spirit to lead. Try to at least discuss the starred questions each week.]

- Review the Advent practice that you decided to do together as a family this Advent - how has it helped you prepare for Jesus?
- How do you feel when you think about light? What does light represent to you - what would you add to the list above?
- *How is Christ a light to you? What areas of your life could you invite Christ into to "light up" even more?
- * How can you and I be light for others?

Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

In our world full of artificial light, it can be easy to miss the importance of the Light of Christ. Gather a few candles and sit close together. Light one candle and then turn out the lights. Spend a little time in silence to appreciate the light. If it is safe for your family to do so, try playing a game of seeking the light - have an adult or older child light the candle away from the group, and the group must seek the light in the dark (or dim) room. Try again, this time having another adult or older child lead the group with a second candle. Discuss your experience: What did it feel like to sit in darkness? ... to look upon the light? ... to seek the light? ... to be led by one with light? What might each of these things represent in your life? ... in our faith? What might the artificial lights be?

End your time together with a prayer: Set out 12 candles (if a shorter form is needed, set out 6 and use the starred verses only). Darken the room, light the first candle, and read Genesis 1:1-5. As each person reads another verse, another candle is lit. Go around until the verses/candles are complete. Conclude with the following prayer: *The light of Christ has been entrusted to us to keep burning brightly. May we always walk as children of the light. May we keep the flame of faith alive in our hearts. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ who is the light of the world. Amen.*

Extras

- Check out the Advent content on FORMED.org, including kid's content: <https://watch.formed.org/advent-and-christmas>
- Ideas for ways to celebrate St. Lucy's feast day: <https://www.catholicicing.com/st-lucy/>
- When you light your tree, pray this Christmas tree blessing: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer/s/blessing-christmas-tree>

Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion is: Jesus said "WHEN YOU PRAY, GO TO YOUR INNER ROOM, CLOSE THE DOOR, AND PRAY TO YOUR FATHER IN SECRET. (Mt 6:6a)." - What do you think he meant by this? How could you do this?

This week's confirmation work is: Unopened Gifts
Watch Decision Point 8.2
What are the Gifts of the Holy Spirit? Which of the Gifts do you feel you are in most need of at this time of your life?
<https://staugustinedward.org/confirmation-preparation/>

Looking Ahead

For Next Week, Dec 21:

- We will celebrate Christmas in the Dec 21 COR sheet - plan ahead to complete the Dec 21 COR guide when it's the best time for your family to celebrate the heart of Christmas
- See the parish or website for additional handouts and coloring pages

Upcoming Events:

- Christmas Masses: Eve 4:30&7:30pm, Day; 8:30&10:30am
- Confirmation AND First Reconciliation/Communion Students - your whole family should plan to attend on Jan 11 6-8 pm at St Augustine for a formation night.

