

## **The 12 Days of the Christmas Season at Home**

Did you know that the first day of the 12 days of Christmas is Christmas day? That means that after Christmas day, there are still 11 days of Christmas left to celebrate! Christmas, like Advent or Lent, is a season of the church year all its own. It marks the 12 days between December 25<sup>th</sup> (the first day of Christmas), when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, and January 6<sup>th</sup> (the first day of Epiphany) when we celebrate the wisemen arriving to visit Jesus. You may have been hard at work in the 25 days leading up to Christmas punching out the boxes of your Advent calendar, but here is a way for you to mark the twelve days of Christmas at home also.

Below are 13 snippets from the bible telling the story of the shepherds and wisemen coming to visit Jesus after he was born. They represent the 12 days of Christmas plus the first day of Epiphany. Each day, cut out the strip of paper with that day's part of the story on it. Find a blank piece of paper and glue it to the bottom. They create the scene on the paper using crayons, markers, glitter glue, sequins, or whatever else you like to craft with. Save each day's story page, and on the day of Epiphany, when you have created the scene for that day, put all of the pages together, three hole punch them, and tie a ribbon through the holes. Now you have your own Christmas season story book!

*(scripture taken from Luke Chapter 2 (Shepherds) and Matthew Chapter 2 (Wisemen), NRSV)*

### **December 25 (Day 1 of Christmas)**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### **December 26 (Day 2 of Christmas)**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

### **December 27 (Day 3 of Christmas)**

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

### **December 28 (Day 4 of Christmas)**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

**December 29 (Day 5 of Christmas)**

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**December 30 (Day 6 of Christmas)**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage."

**December 31 (Day 7 of Christmas)**

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

**January 1 (Day 8 of Christmas)**

They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 6 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

**January 2 (Day 9 of Christmas)**

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.

**January 3 (Day 10 of Christmas)**

Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

**January 4 (Day 11 of Christmas)**

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

**January 5 (Day 12 of Christmas)**

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

**January 6 (Feast of Epiphany)**

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

*(you can also find this 12 Day at Home Practice online at [www.myfaithtogo.org](http://www.myfaithtogo.org))*