

# *Advent Preparations*

In family life, we try to prepare ourselves for the future: our next vacation, our children's education, our retirement. We are careful not to allow ourselves to be caught by surprise so that we can handle any challenges our family may face. The Scripture readings we hear in church during Advent remind us that we are called to be attentive in our spiritual lives as well. We are to wait in hope so that the coming salvation will not catch us unprepared. This means attending to our family's spiritual life as carefully as we attend to other important family matters.

As you gather as a family, talk about a time when you received surprise visitors at your house, perhaps a neighbor stopping by or a relative who arrived unannounced. Was your household prepared to receive this surprise guest? What might your family have done differently if you knew ahead of time that this visitor was going to arrive? Jesus told his disciples that no one but the Father knows when the Son of Man will come in glory. Read what Jesus told his disciples about this in Mark 13:33–37.



During Advent, we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but we also check in to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. Talk to your family about how you are doing in attending to your spiritual life as a family. Recommit yourselves to praying daily, reading Scripture, and staying faithful to God's commandments. Pray together that through this Advent season

your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again. As a concluding prayer read Paul's words to the Corinthians found in 1 Corinthians 1:3–9, or pray the Lord's Prayer.