

Loving ↔ Advent / Christmas**Curriculum Directory : Life in Christ****Introduction**

The third theme this term ↔ Advent / Christmas uses the topic 'Gifts' to focus on God as a loving Father who gives us, as gift, Jesus, the Son of God, so that we too may become children of God. The children will explore the giving and receiving of gifts, saying thank-you and showing appreciation for the love a gift represents. They will learn about Advent and Christmas and the Church's celebration of the coming of Jesus, God's greatest gift.

Search

Gifts given and received are a sign and expression of love and friendship.

Of all the gifts you have received, which are your most treasured ones. Why?

[Pause for reflection and sharing]

Revelation

In celebrating Christmas, Christians celebrate the gift of Jesus, God's Only Son, given as a sign and expression of God's love. Our giving and receiving reflects the truth that all life is given by God and life is given meaning through the gift of Jesus. We also recognise all gifts given and received in love are an experience of God's love incarnate.

Listen now to these Scripture readings, which tell of Jesus as 'gift', given to us in love by God.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3: 16-17)

With God on our side, who can be against us? Since God did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that He will not refuse anything He can give. (St Paul's letter to the Romans, 8: 31-32, written just over 20 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In what ways do you think of Jesus as a 'gift'? Who has been a 'gift' in your life?

[Pause for reflection and sharing]

Response

Into the Classroom

As a school, are there any gifts you can give this Christmas? How does your school enable children to recognise and value gifts?

During Advent, how can we help the children and adults in our school community to acknowledge, celebrate and use their gifts for others?

What ideas do you have for a central focal display for the whole school (hall, entrance area etc).

[A time to share ideas with one another]

Prayer and Reflections

Let us ponder for a few moments these words of Henri Nouwen:

“As we wait we remember Him for whom we are waiting
and as we remember Him, we create a community ready
to welcome Him when He comes.
Lord, by your grace, may we learn the art
Of waiting for You and Your gifts
With eager and joyful hearts.”

Let us pray our final prayer together:

In the stillness of the night God enters human history through the birth of his only Son. He is our peace and hope. In Him, we praise God for his goodness to us in giving us so great a gift. May we receive this gift with joy and share it with all those whom we meet. Amen. (Midnight Mass for Christmas Day, The Sunday Missal.)