

Joyful Catholic Families
**Lesson #4 – Christmas: Follow the Star,
& More on the Mass**

Before class: put the stars in a gift bag by the tabernacle.

Read “Baby Jesus”: ([My Bible Friends](#), by Etta B. Degering, book one. Stop reading the story after the part about the 3 kings)

- How did the shepherds find out about Jesus? (an angel told them)
- How did the kings/wisemen find Jesus? (they followed the star)
- When did the star appear that the kings/wisemen followed?
(on Christmas day – the day Jesus was born)
- The kings/wisemen started following the star after Jesus was born. It could have been up to two years after His birth that they found Jesus.
- Our church celebrates the day that the 3 kings/wisemen visit baby Jesus.
- We call it Epiphany
- Epiphany is on January 6th – twelve days after Christmas. As a church we celebrate it on the first Sunday after the New Year.

Stable:

[\(click here for a post with more information and a PDF pattern\)](#)

I have some nativity figures I want to show you.

(Show each figure one at a time and let the children guess who the figures are.)

I have a set like this for each of you, but first we need to make something for it.

Where was Jesus born? (in a stable)

So you need a stable for your nativity figures.

(Show the stable)

Children and parents color, cut and tape the stables.

Give each child a nativity set (without the star):

[\(click here for a post with more information and a PDF pattern\)](#)

Say the name of each figure. The children, with parents help, find each figure.

Children tell their parents the nativity story using the figures.

When someone notices that the star is missing:

- Does anyone have a star? (no)
- We need to find them. Where should we look?
- Let's think about where to look:
 - Who followed the star? (3 kings/wisemen)
 - Why did they follow the star? (to find Jesus)
 - What in our church is like a star and helps us to find Jesus in the church? (the sanctuary lamp)
 - When we see a sanctuary lamp, what do we know? (That a tabernacle is nearby.)
 - And what is in a tabernacle? (Jesus, in the form of bread. Remember that at Mass, the bread becomes Jesus' body. Any extra consecrated hosts are placed in the tabernacle.)
 - So where do you think we might find our stars? (by the tabernacle)
 - Let's go look by the tabernacle.
 - Review behavior in Church:
 - No loud talking
 - No running
 - Remember, people may be praying
 - Go to the church and find the stars by the tabernacle.

While in Church, Look at the Following Items:

(Look at the bottom of [this post](#) for the pdf of the large pictures used in this lesson.)

Let the children hold and/or touch as many of these items as possible:

- **Altar:** (If you didn't see it last month)
 - What is on the altar at Mass? (chalice, paten, purificator,...)
- **Ambo:** (If you didn't see it last month)
 - Where the priest and lector read the readings from.
- **Bells** – What is something a server uses at Mass that makes noise?
 - Show the children how the server rings the bells
 - Let the children ring the bells
 - This month listen for how many times the bells are rung at Mass.
- **Candle:**
 - We use candles at Mass to remind us that Jesus is the Light.
 - How many candles do you see by the altar and ambo? (help the children count the candles)
- **Paschal candle:**
 - This is the candle that is blessed at the Easter Vigil.
 - This candle is used at baptisms and funerals

Go back to classroom and the children finish telling their parents the Nativity story.

Explain Follow the Star:

- Did you notice your star has a string on it?
- Starting on Christmas – or today if you want – the star is put somewhere in your home and the 3 kings/wisemen by it.
- Each day (or whenever you remember it) move the star and the 3 kings/wisemen a little closer to the nativity scene.
- On Epiphany – January 6th – the star should be above the stable: above where Jesus and Mary and Jesus are. The 3 kings/wisemen should be near Jesus.

Play Nativity BINGO:

[\(click here for a post with more information and the BINGO cards\)](#)

Pass out Home Lessons and Pages for Mass Books

(find the Mass booklet pages in [this post](#))

Stickers: Give each child a sticker as they leave.

Supplies:

Nametags & Permanent markers

Prayers for prayer rings

Home lessons

Snack

Plates, napkins, water & glasses

Stickers (for each child at the end of class)

Stars in gift bag by tabernacle

Bells

My Bible Friends, by Etta B. Degering, book one

Cone shaped nativity set for each child

Sample stable

Copies of stables

Crayons

Tape

Scissors

Nativity BINGO cards

Nativity BINGO call cards

Papers to mark BINGO cards

New pages for the children's Mass booklets:

- Bells
- Candles
- Paschal candle