

Resource #2:

Christmas Tradition Ideas

The ideas listed below are for Advent Calendars that can hold notes and presents. Many of these calendars have numbered doors with openings behind them. Start on December 1st and end on December 24th. Each day have a child open a door to reveal what's inside. (The present could be for one child or many, depending upon the gift.) If a prize is too big to fit in the box, put a note behind the door giving clues as to where the item is located in the house. Get creative and have fun!

- Secret Sibling day- Draw names and get creative! This can be done for one day only, or for the whole Advent season, revealing names on December 24th. _____
- You can stay up ½ an hour past your bedtime _____
- Extra dessert tonight _____
- You don't have to finish something on your plate _____
- You can sleep in mom and dad's bed tonight _____
- You can pick one thing from the Dollar store (or roll up a new dollar bill) _____
- Good for one trip to the library _____
- Game night – your choice! _____
- You pick – movie night! _____
- Skip a day of music practice _____
- Dinner out with mom or dad _____
- Special treat – Dad's bringing you a happy meal for school lunch! _____
- After family pictures, you've earned a trip to the ice cream store (don't forget about extended family pictures as well – make reservations early for large groups!) _____
- Off to the mall – for pictures with Santa! (Don't forget to write your list!) _____
- Free bed-making for a week _____
- Your afternoon chores are forgiven _____
- Night of pampering – bubble bath, nails painted _____
- Foot and back massage – compliments of mom _____
- Dinner of your choice _____
- Family Christmas movie time - Grab your popcorn and pillow! _____
- Get ready for a day of BAKING! _____
- Grab a Christmas book – and let's read! (or give a new one) _____
- Grab some hot chocolate, jump in the car and let's go see Christmas lights! _____
- Let's make a Gingerbread House! _____
- Open the present under the tree with the gold ribbon!
(Done on the 24th – presents contain kids' Christmas PJs) _____
- First seven days could be the "What God wants for Christmas" nativity boxes _____
- Day of crafts with mom (paper chains, fingerknit chains, snowflakes, etc.) _____
- Let's go Christmas caroling to the neighbors! _____
- Plan a nice night out – "The Nutcracker", a traveling Broadway show, etc. _____
- Don't forget your spouse! – use a door and fill their needs as well – day of Christmas shopping, round of golf, night out (or in) at the movies - personalize it! _____
- Assign each child a door – they're in charge of that day's prize _____
- Let's make food for Santa's reindeer! (recipe on resource #3) _____
- _____
- _____

Resource #3:

Gift-giving Ideas

- *Functional gifts – personalized laundry bag for new high school graduate*
- *Supportive gifts – help stretch someone’s budget (stationary and stamp, magazine subscription)*
- *Remembrance gifts – flowers, photo album*
- *Gift of service – do each other’s chores, volunteer to babysit*
- *Monetary gift – get creative on how to give/ gift certificates/mall credit cards*

Creative gifts –

- *Classes – sewing, sports, gym membership*
- *Ice cream certificate with a homemade card from my child with a picture of an ice cream cone on it. It states “Thanks for being such a COOL teacher!”*
- *A gift certificate to Starbucks with a card that reads, “Thanks for keeping me going strong this year. Hope this helps to keep you going strong through the holidays!”*
- *Homemade bag of hot chocolate with a card that reads “May this warm you throughout the holiday season”.*
- *A candle with a card that reads about the warmth and love and appreciation that makes up this holiday.*
- *The kids have had fun making bookmarks that read: “Thank you for making such a positive mark on our lives”.*
- *Caramel apples – with a note that says “You’re the apple of my eye”.*
- *Legend of the candy cane poem with a candy cane (see below)*
- *Reindeer food poem with reindeer food attached (see below)*

Copy onto red paper and attach a candy cane.

***The Legend of the Candy Cane** – According to the legend, there was a candy maker who wanted to invent a candy that was a witness to Christ.*

The result was the candy cane. First of all he used a hard candy because Christ is the Rock of all ages. This hard candy was shaped so that it would resemble either a “J” for Jesus or a shepherd’s staff. He made it white to represent the Purity of Christ. Finally a red stripe was added to represent the blood of Christ shed for the sins of the world and three thinner stripes for the stripes He received on our behalf when the Roman soldiers whipped Him.

So the next time you see a candy cane, hear the Sermon it preaches: Jesus Chris, the Good Shepherd, is the Rock of all Ages who suffered and died for our sins.

Copy following poem and recipe onto red paper and attach a small plastic bag of reindeer food to the right of the poem.

Magic Reindeer Food:

Sprinkle on the lawn at night.
The moon will make it sparkle bright!
As Santa’s reindeer fly and roam.
This will guide them to your home!

Santa’s Secret Recipe – From the North Pole:

½ cup sugar
½ cup oatmeal
Sprinkles of red or green
Sugar crystal