



## Our Lady of the Snows Church

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## Thoughtful Moments

### Good questions

Before you ask your child a question, think about why you are asking. Are you looking for



information or does a statement work better? "Why don't you ever remember to feed the dog?" serves no constructive purpose. Instead, think about saying, "You haven't fed the dog and he looks pretty hungry." A statement of the problem gives your child the chance to come up with his own solution.

### Judge not

Help children to remember that criticizing others is a serious business. "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37). Better to worry about our own behavior and let others do the same.

### Happy New Year!

The first Sunday of Advent (November 28) is also the first day of our new liturgical year. We begin Sunday Cycle C this year. Advent is the first season of the Church year.



## Cultivate thankful hearts

A recent study found that gratitude is connected to happiness in children as young as five years old.

Thanksgiving provides an opportunity to nurture gratitude and create awareness of the source of our blessings. "Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34).

**Show children your thankful heart.** Be a role model of gratitude by thanking God for His blessings.

Enumerate your favorite gifts out loud, and encourage children to count their own: God's love, your family, your parish, your health.

**Serve the poor.** When children are given the opportunity to help others, they become aware of the abundance

in their own lives. During Advent, collect gently used toys and clothing and donate to children in need. Let them choose canned goods at the grocery store that you can donate to a homeless shelter or food bank. Put money in the poor box at church on Sunday.

**Schedule a "go without" day.** Pick an item to eliminate for a day – screens, sweets, soft drinks, bread –

to increase awareness and appreciation when it is reintroduced. Remind youngsters that many around the world go without each day.

**Make it a habit.** At dinnertime or bedtime, take turns sharing one reason each of you felt gratitude that day. Be sure to thank God after every one.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics celebrate Advent?

The season of Advent is a time of joyful waiting and preparation for the birth of Christ. We are encouraged to meditate on Mary's humble and trustful "Yes" to God, her joy at the fulfillment of God's promise of the Messiah,



and what must have been a joyful-but-busy time preparing for the birth of Jesus. As we spiritually accompany Mary in preparing for the Christ Child, we can prepare our own hearts and homes for Jesus' coming at Christmas.