



Knights of Columbus

Keep Christ in Christmas

Program Guidebook



Faith in Action

Family

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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to keep Christ in Christmas, we must incorporate celebrations and engage in dialogue that honor his birth. Jesus Christ is the greatest gift to mankind, as he was brought here on earth as our Savior, to redeem us from our sinful ways.

The Knights of Columbus offers a number of programs dedicated to bringing back the true spirit of Christmas and to reminding families in your community that the season is about more than Santa Claus and presents. Our engaging and wholesome activities are described below. These programs will provide a foundation of faith for your

children and parish community by reinforcing the idea that Christmas is not the commercial holiday portrayed on TV. It is the ultimate celebration of tolerance and the Holy Family.

If your council has not participated in the past, this is the year to put your faith into action and start a great tradition. Help us spread the joyful tidings of Christmas with brother Knights, family, friends and parish community.

Spread the Light of Christ

SPREAD THE LIGHT OF CHRIST/CRÈCHE BLESSING

The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ brought a great illumination of hope into the world. The Knights of Columbus invites families throughout Christendom to help Spread the Light of Christ each Advent by lighting and blessing a Christmas tree at your parish or another approved public location.

As part of the tree lighting event, you may also ask your pastor to preside over the dedication and blessing of your church's crèche.

Councils may want to combine this event with the Journey to the Inn program. The information that follows as well as the *Journey to the Inn Program Guide* (#9898) have several suggestions and action steps to guide councils in celebrating Advent in your parish community.

Suggested activities include:

Caroling as a parish community

Collecting clothing and food for your neighbors in need (which could tie into the Helping Hands community program)

Serving snacks and refreshments to the parish community during a parish social



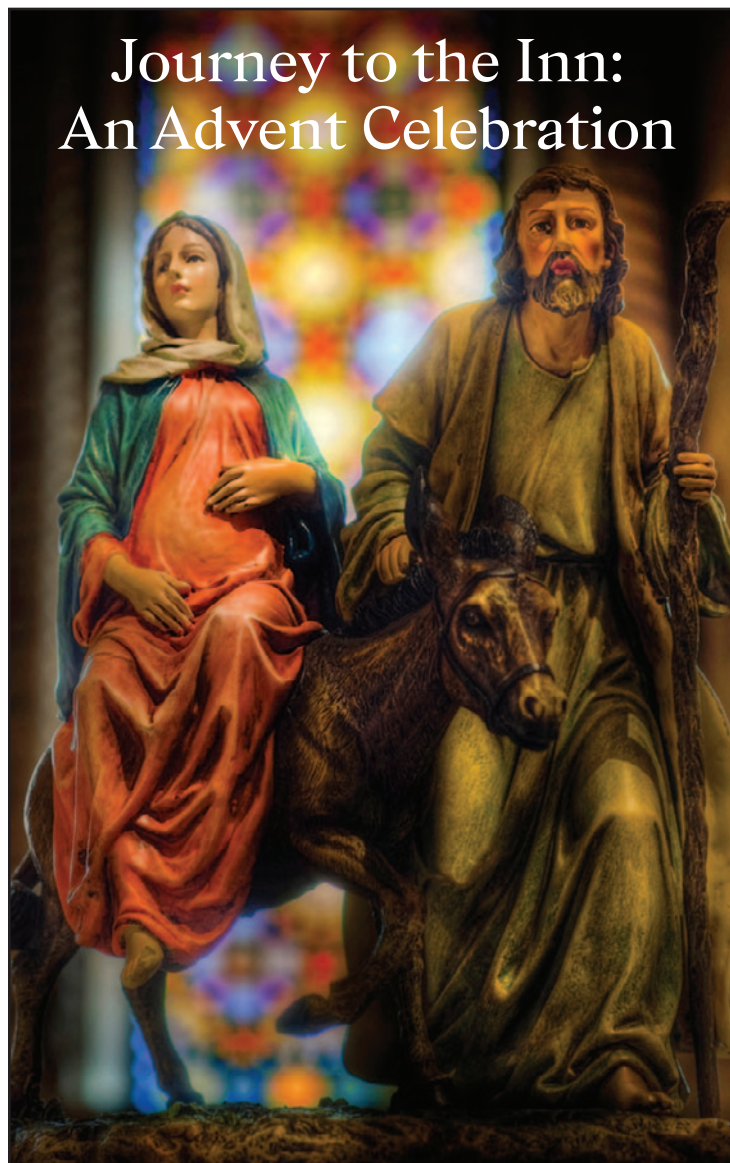
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Spread the Light of Christ Poster

Journey to the Inn

JOURNEY TO THE INN: AN ADVENT CELEBRATION

In an increasingly secular world, many Catholics are faced with the difficulty of sharing the faith. With the bustle of Christmas shopping and the frequent removal of religious imagery from Christmas displays, it seems that communities have forgotten the incredible gift of Christ and the beauty of his birth.



#9898

Journey to the Inn: An Advent Celebration

Facing similar concerns when first introducing Christ to the New World, Franciscan missionaries in the 16th century found that simple reenactments of the story of Christ's birth could touch the hearts of those they encountered. The Spanish missionaries referred to these ceremonies as Las Posadas — meaning “the inns” or “the shelters” — as they emphasized Mary and Joseph's search for shelter before Our Savior's birth.

The tradition of the Posada helps us to remember the first Christmas in a way that unites people of faith throughout the American continent. This event brings together people of many cultures and shows how faith and the celebration of Christmas transcend any differences we may have.

These festivities have remained popular throughout Latin America and the Southwestern United States, yet children and adults from all cultural backgrounds can use similar celebrations to embrace the true meaning of the Christmas season and share the joy of Christ's birth.

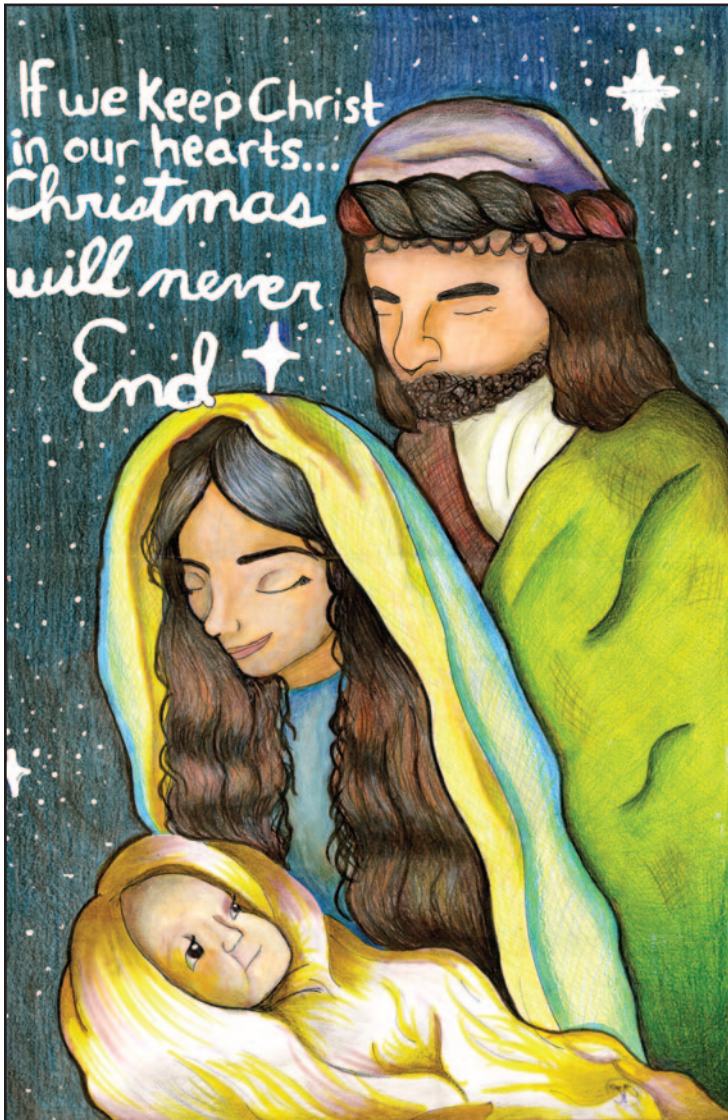
For ideas on how to adapt this tradition to your own community, councils can turn to *Journey to the Inn: An Advent Celebration* (#9898). It may be obtained through Supplies Online, the supply ordering portal available on Officers Online. Through this booklet, the Order hopes to share various cultural Christmas celebrations with all Knights and their families.

Poster Contest

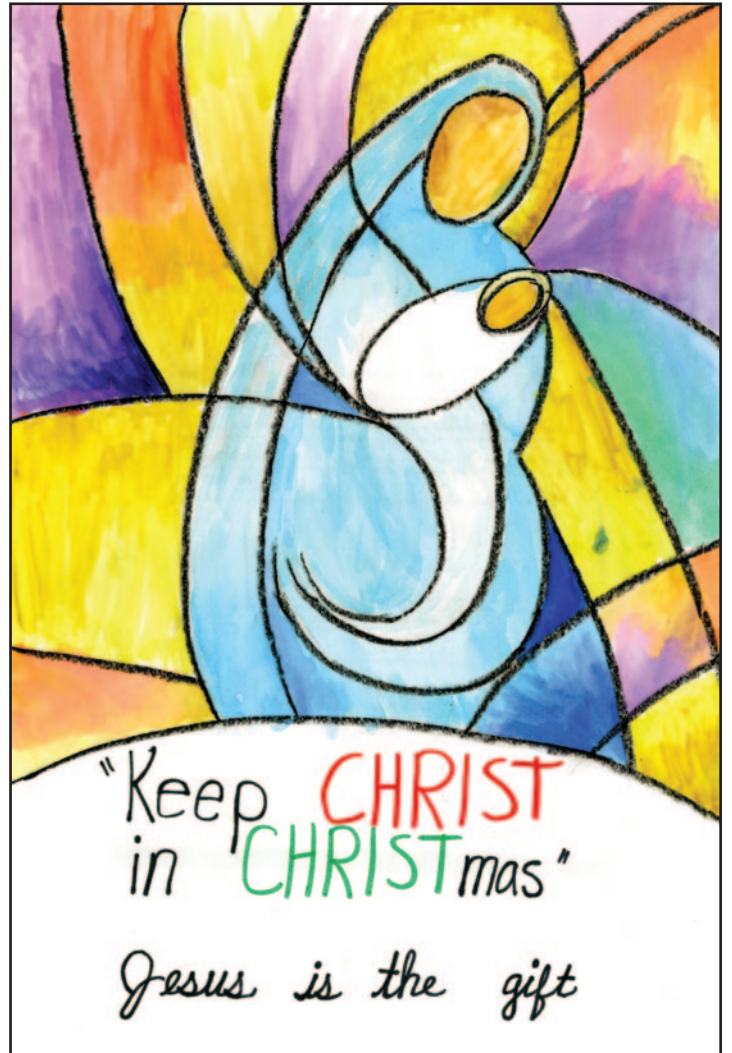
KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS POSTER CONTEST

Christmas has become a secular holiday for many, especially children. To combat this, the Knights of Columbus has introduced the Keep Christ in Christmas poster contest. This program will allow youth to engage their creative talent and imagination while understanding the true, spiritual meaning of Christmas.

Entries in the Knights of Columbus Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest must include a slogan reflecting the topic and an original visual image.



Isabel Mills



Reagan Liseu

The contest is open to all youth between the grade groups of Kindergarten through 8th grade. Contest entrants compete in one of the grade categories: Kindergarten, 1st through 2nd, 3rd through 4th, 5th through 6th, 7th through 8th. Each local, district, regional or jurisdictional competition may have up to 3 winning entries - a first, second, and third place winner in each grade category.

Council officials should order the *Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Kit* (#CPC-Kit) through Supplies Online, the supply ordering portal available on Officers Online.

Additional Ideas

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

Following are suggested ideas that could be combined with Keep Christ in Christmas programming.

Encourage all members to display a Nativity scene (crèche) on their property or at their businesses this Christmas season.

If your parish has a Nativity scene, ask your pastor or chaplain to deliver a blessing as part of your Advent season festivities.

Broadcast the true meaning of Christmas with the Knights of Columbus TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Four previous PSAs are: Remember it's CHRISTmas, Christian Refugees Need Hope at Christmas, Christian Refugee Relief and KofC Gives the Warmth of Christmas.

Radio PSAs are also available to plant the message while listeners drive their cars, cook in the kitchen or simply relax at home. The Knights of Columbus offers a few PSAs available for download in English: Need, Merry What? and Getting or Giving.

Submit a Keep Christ in Christmas advertisement to your church bulletin or local newspaper and include it in your council newsletter.

Offer to help your parish or another parish in need prepare for Christmas through cleaning, repairing or providing decorations or flowers.

Note: While Breakfast with Santa is a wonderful program, it does not satisfy the requirements for the Keep Christ in Christmas community program.

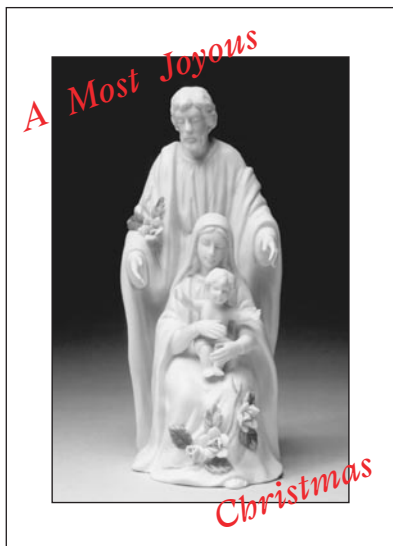


Additional Resources

KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS RESOURCES

To help you promote the various Keep Christ in Christmas activities, the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission has a number of support materials available to

help your council run a successful program. The below items can be ordered through Supplies Online, the supply ordering portal available on Officers Online.



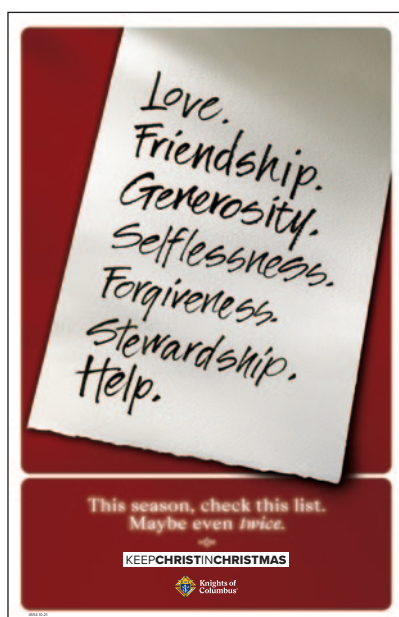
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Christmas Membership Card Holder



#2760

"For Unto Us a Child is Born" Poster



#4554

"Check the List" Poster



#4555

"Remember, it's CHRISTmas" Poster



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