

Advent 2018

GATHER AROUND AND **READ** GOD'S STORY OF COMPASSION, ONE DAY AT A TIME. THEN GO AND **DO** THE SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND LIVE OUT YOUR OWN STORY OF COMPASSION AS A FAMILY.

1

A young couple, Mary and Joseph, get engaged.

Tape change to a vending machine for someone else to find. *(Surprise!)*

2

One day, God sends the angel Gabriel to Mary. He has some very special news!

Help your child buy their favorite book to donate to a children's hospital. *(Stay for reading time if you can!)*

3

Mary is greatly troubled when she hears the angel's greeting.

Pay for the person's order behind you in the drive-thru. *(Being sneaky while doing good is fun!)*

4

Gabriel responds to Mary: "Don't be afraid; God is very happy with you!"

Send cards to service men and women who are serving overseas. *(Long-distance Christmas cheer!)*

5

Gabriel tells Mary the special news: She will have a baby boy, and He will be named Jesus.

Donate new toys to a local charity that provides for families in need. *(Visit www.toysfortots.org for some great info!)*

6

Gabriel shares more details of God's plan with Mary: "Jesus will be great and will be called God's very own son!"

Help someone do a chore or other job. *(And sing Christmas carols while you work!)*

7

Mary doesn't understand how she can have a baby without being married, but the angel Gabriel assures her of a great truth: Nothing is impossible with God.

Donate non-perishable food or toiletry items to your local food bank or volunteer to sort donated items.

8

"I serve God with my life and want all that you have said to happen," Mary tells the angel, and he leaves.

Give Christmas candy attached to a gift card for lunch to your mail carrier. *(They give to you every day!)*

9

Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth and is so overwhelmed with God's goodness that she sings a song of praise.

Send some Christmas love to a child in another part of the world. *(www.compassion.com is a great place to start!)*

10

Caesar Augustus wants to know how many people are in his empire, so he tells all the people to go back to their hometown to be registered and counted.

Donate books you no longer need to a local school. *(You'll be giving the stories a second life!)*

11

Joseph takes Mary, who is pregnant, to his hometown of Bethlehem to be counted.

Donate pet supplies to an animal shelter. *(Animals need compassion too!)*

12

While Joseph and Mary are in Bethlehem, the time comes for the baby to be born.

Donate coats you've outgrown or blankets you don't need. *(Warmth is a wonderful gift!)*

13

Mary gives birth to Jesus, wraps Him in swaddling cloths and lays Him in a manger because there is no room for them anywhere.

Make room for your neighbors by choosing a night to invite just one neighbor family *(or maybe two!)* over for coffee and dessert.

14

At night in a nearby field, shepherds are watching their flocks.

Give candy canes to the residents at your local nursing home. *(Hugs are a welcomed bonus!)*

15

The sky lights up—God has sent an angel to the shepherds to tell them the good news.

Donate a pair of new Christmas pajamas for a foster kid. *(Choose the coziest, snuggliest ones.)*

16

When the shepherds see the angel, they're afraid!

Drop some money in the Salvation Army bucket. *(Make the bell ring!)*

17

The angel tries to calm the shepherds: "Don't be afraid—I bring wonderful news that will bring joy to all of the world!"

Make a Christmas card for someone who needs a little cheer. *(Add glitter for more cheer!)*

18

"A Savior—the Rescuer you have been waiting for is born today!" the angel proclaims to the shepherds.

Take coffee or a favorite soda to your teachers. *(Christmas caffeine!)*

19

The angel explains that the shepherds will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.

Leave some Christmas candy with a thank you note for the garbage crew. *(Or anyone else who cleans up after you.)*

20

More angels come to celebrate the good news—they arrive at the shepherd's field and begin praising God!

Volunteer at a local food kitchen. *(Don't forget to smile and say, "Merry Christmas!")*

21

The shepherds leave their flocks and hurry to find Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who is lying in a manger.

Deliver Christmas flowers to a widow or widower in your neighborhood. *(Help them deck their halls!)*

22

After they see the baby, the shepherds excitedly go and tell everyone they run into the good news!

Tell a joke to make someone smile. *(Or tell several to spread even more joy!)*

23

The shepherds return to their flocks, praising God for all they had seen and heard.

As you are running last minute errands, take a few minutes to speak kind words to the folks at the store counters.

24

Mary names the baby Jesus just as the angel had told her to do.

Take Christmas cookies to your local fire station. *(Add a high five!)*

25

God has sent His Son to rescue us because He loves us so very much! Luke 1:26–2:21

Grab some hot chocolate and read the entire calendar Christmas story together. *(Talk about what God did to show compassion for the world. Hint: JESUS!)*

