

Christmas

The celebration of the birth of Jesus is marked with many services in churches, and traditional family gatherings. It is customary to depict the nativity in model forms, under or near Christmas trees in churches and some homes. Both churches and homes are decorated with evergreen trees, as the symbols of everlasting life. Feasting and exchanges of gifts have long been the order of the day. Though some traditions would have the exchange of gifts immediately after the Midnight Mass, others, especially those to servants, were done on the following day, often in Christmas boxes, hence 'Boxing' Day.



- 1 Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- 2 Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
What part of the story did you like?
Which pictures did you like?
- 3 Talk to the children about how Mary might have felt after her long journey, and having no where to stay. Talk about the stable, how comfortable or uncomfortable it would have been? How do the children feel when they are cold?
- 4 Mary and Joseph had some unexpected visitors. Ask the children who they like to visit them.
- 5 The Kings bought Jesus some presents. Get the children to find out what the gifts were, learn their words and their meanings. Ask the children which gifts/presents they like to receive.
- 6 Additional stories and supporting activities about the Christmas season, can be found under St. Nicholas and St. Boniface on iChild. You'll also find plenty of resources within the Christmas section.

The Christmas Story



**Mary and Joseph made
the long journey from
Nazareth where they lived,
to Bethlehem, so they
could pay their taxes.**



When they arrived in Bethlehem they could not find anywhere to stay. Eventually an innkeeper helped them by letting them stay in his cattle shed at the back of the Inn.



**During the night
Mary gave birth
to her son.**



**The angels told the
shepherds in the fields to
go to Bethlehem, to see
the special child that had
been born.**



Later, 3 Kings came because they saw a bright star that told them a special baby had been born. They gave the baby special gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.



These gifts had special meanings; Gold for a King, Frankincense for God and Myrrh for Death; as Jesus was to die for the sins of everyone.