

## SOGL Kindergarten Family Prayers

December: Blessing the Christmas Tree

### **Preparing to Pray**

One of the most challenging aspects of celebrating the holiday season with your child is to help them to understand that Christmas is the birthday of Jesus, God's only Son and our Savior. Everything we do—from purchasing gifts, baking, decorating, even visiting Santa in the mall—is grounded in our belief that Christmas is an important part of our Catholic faith. It is common for young children to get so caught up in the secular aspects of the season that they forget that Christmas is about celebrating Jesus' birthday—a time to keep Jesus in our hearts.

Although Jesus “is the reason for the season,” don't quash your child's joy and excitement. Instead, build on your preparations by helping them to see how everything we do relates to our joy in preparing for and celebrating Jesus' birthday.

After decorating the tree, but before the star or angel is placed on the top, gather the family around the tree. Choose a prayer leader and invite family members to quiet themselves.

### **Praying Together**

**Leader:** Loving God our Father, we are preparing our hearts and home to celebrate the birthday of your Son, Jesus, who was born long ago on the first Christmas Day. May this Christmas tree help us to remember that you sent Jesus to be with us.

(Invite family members to extend their arms over the tree and repeat each of the following petitions).

**Leader:** May the green branches on our tree remind us that you are always with us.

**All:** Bless this tree, O Lord.

**Leader:** May the lights remind us that Jesus brings light to our lives.

**All:** Bless this tree, O Lord.

**Leader:** May the ornaments remind us of the happy times we share as a family.

**All:** Bless this tree, O Lord.

**Leader:** May the gifts we will place under the tree be a sign of our generous love for Jesus and for one another.

**All:** Bless this tree, O Lord.

*(Place the star at the top of the tree)*

**Leader:** May the star lead us closer to Jesus every day.

**All: Bless this tree, O Lord.**

**Leader:** May the joy and peace of Jesus fill our hearts and lives.

**All: Bless this tree, O Lord.**

*(Conclude by lighting the tree and singing a familiar carol together).*

**Working with Your Child**

- Purchase an inexpensive, child-friendly crèche scene to place under the tree for your child to use to tell and retell the Christmas story. This will help keep them be mindful of why we celebrate Christmas.
- As the Christmas tree is lighted each evening, encourage family members to pray, “Bless this tree, O Lord. May it help us to remember that Jesus is our greatest gift.”