# Advent Activities

## Step 1: Complete by 2nd Sunday of Advent

- **Watch:** "Crux" from Formed (instructions for accessing your free formed account through Holy Family can be found here)
- **Reflect:** Spend 15 minutes as a family asking & answering these (or other pertinent) questions:
    - The video ends with a question: "What experiences in your life can only be explained by God?" How would you answer that?
    - The presenter, we discover, is a Catholic bishop by the name of Donald Hying. Bishop Hying says that the thought of life being meaningless, "a random collision of events" makes him "sad and tired". Why might meaninglessness make a person feel sad and tired?
    - How do you see hopelessness affecting our world?
    - Sometimes the word "hope" is used interchangeably with "wish." ("I hope it doesn't rain." "I hope Grandma made those cookies again.") Traditionally, however, hope is defined in relationship to eternity, to heaven. Pope Benedict XVI wrote in his encyclical Spe salvi (Saved in Hope): "The present, even if it is arduous, can be lived and accepted if it leads towards a goal, if we can be sure of this goal, and if this goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey" (Spe Salvi, 1). How does this sort of hope differ from wishful thinking or optimism?
- **Commit:** Advent is about preparing ourselves for the source of our hope: Jesus. But as we discussed, we need to make room for silence so we can make room for Him. This week, commit to making room for silence at a time you normally have background noise. For example, turn the radio off in the car or choose not to turn on the television. In one of those moments, become aware of God's presence and have a conversation with him. Be ready to share your experience in our next meeting.
- **Complete By:** 2nd Sunday of Advent (fill out this form to let me know you've finished)

## Step 2: Complete by 3rd Sunday of Advent

- **Watch:** "Kenosis"
- **Reflect:** Spend 15 minutes as a family asking & answering these (or other pertinent) questions:
    - How did your challenge of making time for more silence go last week?
    - The video ends with a question: "What draws you most to Jesus?" How would you answer that?
    - One of the reasons it takes faith to believe in God is because he can feel distant and mysterious. The Church focuses on the virtue of faith the second week of Advent. As we discussed in the last session, according to the Catechism, faith is to entrust oneself wholly to God and to believe absolutely what he says. What things or experiences make faith easy or difficult for you?
    - Agnostics believe in the probability that there is a God, but think that no one can know for sure, and they believe there is no way of knowing God or his will is for our lives. How would you ask an agnostic about faith?
- **Commit:** The commitment this week is to consciously decide to do something "self-emptying" every day.
- **Complete By:** 3rd Sunday of Advent (fill out this form to let me know you've finished)

## Step 3: Complete by 4th Sunday of Advent

- **Watch:** "Blaze"
- **Reflect:** Spend 15 minutes as a family asking & answering these (or other pertinent) questions:
    - How did you do with your commitment last week to consciously decide to do something "self-emptying" every day?
    - The video ends with a question: "What human encounter has drawn love and service from your heart?" How would you answer that?
    - Bishop Hying begins by talking about fire and light. Advent is imbued with the images of fire and light. What is the meaning of the Advent wreath and the lighting of the candles each week at Mass?
    - The mission of the Church is to be the light of the world and a city set on a hill [cf. Matthew 5:14]. In other words, the Church needs to be visible and known. Can you think of some examples where the teaching of the Church has provided light to the world? Can you think of some examples where the charitable works of the Church have provided light to the world?
- **Commit:** Our commitment this week is to prepare our hearts as a suitable resting place for baby
- Jesus. Plan to do a thorough examination of conscience and go to Confession.
- **Complete By:** 4th Sunday of Advent (fill out this form to let me know you've finished)