

'Joy to the World!' Advent Calendar **Primary**

Experience the joy of Jesus birth expressed in art and videos from across the globe using this online advent calendar.

This link will take you to the Advent calendar.

[Advent Calendar 2025 \(Primary\)](#)

Or you can go via our [Diocese of Guildford website here](#).

In the event that the direct links stops working the one on the website will still work.

Online Advent Calendar 2025

This joy at the birth of Jesus is shared by Christians across the world. In our Advent calendar for 2025, we will explore how Christians across the world tell this universal story in words and images, with some fun for families to share at the weekends! Across this time, we have used some resources created by Compassion, a Christian child-sponsorship charity, who have created beautifully sensitive and joyfully cultural retellings of the Nativity. We often revisit the same questions exploring how different global contexts might influence how the story is shown: the story is the same, the joy is the same, but the settings are very different. We hope that you enjoy seeing how others celebrate; perhaps you will get some new ideas for your celebrations this year. Feliz Navidad!!

When you click on the door you will find:



an image;



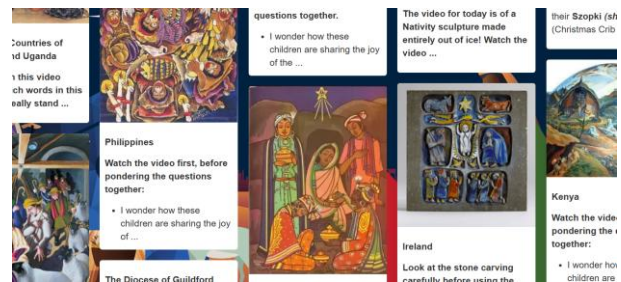
some wondering questions;



a video of the nativity story, song or

celebration;

The calendar ends on the last day of term.



On the next pages are a grid showing the content for each day. You may wish to select questions according to the age of your pupils.

At the end of this document, you will find the images that we have used and the sources.

Using the Advent Calendar for collective worship in schools






The calendar would work well in class collective worship. You might wish to ask a pupil to lead this

There is a separate calendar for

secondary pupils.

For each day to properly be an act of collective worship, spend a few moments together reflecting or praying about the things you've discussed.

The questions are designed to establish some connections with the everyday lives of your pupils, so should help you to make this time appropriate and inclusive for all. .

Date	 Place / Culture	 Video from YouTube	 Wondering Questions
Mon 1 st ^d	Joy the world Introduction	Masaka Kids Africana Dancing Christmas Time https://youtu.be/HctyEziLn5c?si=LY9JHMwMwpQlompK	<p>Joy to the World! When the angels visited the shepherds to tell them that Jesus had been born, they said '<i>Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people.</i>' Luke 2:10 This joy at the birth of Jesus is shared by Christians across the world. In this Advent calendar we will explore how Christians have painted the story of Jesus birth and how they celebrate Christmas. The story is the same, the joy is the same, but the settings are very different. We hope that you enjoy seeing how others celebrate; perhaps you will get some new ideas for your celebrations this year.</p> <p>Look carefully at the picture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wonder which creatures you can see visiting Baby Jesus? • I wonder which one of the people could be you? Why do you think that? • I wonder which creatures would you draw visiting Baby Jesus if you were drawing your own picture? <p>As you watch the video together, how do these Ugandan children express their joy at the good news of the birth of Jesus?</p>
Tue 2 nd	Indonesia	Compassion Indonesian Nativity https://youtu.be/jJdhAsaDnbc?si=ixhekGMW8E2-p1Dn	<p>I wonder how these children are sharing the joy of the Christmas story? In this cultural retelling of the Nativity, I wonder what's the same as the version you know? I wonder what might be different, and why? I wonder what you might want to ask the children who have retold the story? Look at the image – I wonder what connections you might find with the video?</p>
Wed 3 rd ^h	New Zealand Māori	At St Paul's Church Auckland New Zealand https://youtu.be/kWq60oyrHVQ?si=b_gW8704WA-0t4VL	<p>Look at the image, showing Mary wearing a traditional Māori necklace called a hei-tiki and holding Baby Jesus. I wonder how you think Mary is feeling? I wonder what might surprise you about this image of Mary and Jesus? I wonder what else you can see in this image? I wonder what questions you might want to ask the artist?</p>

Thur 4 th	Poland	Pip the beach cat Krakow Nativity Scene competition https://youtu.be/IHQeYFbVQAw?si=uoa7YMR13coVe6SK	Today is the first Thursday of December; in Krakow in Poland, people will be holding their Szopki (<i>shop-ki</i>) (Christmas Crib celebration). Watch the video first , to see some of these beautiful, glittering nativity scenes. The buildings are meant to look like Krakow, so Jesus is shown as coming to Krakow. I wonder if you can see Baby Jesus as Pip the cat looks at each szopki? I wonder which one won the competition?! I wonder which elements are linked to the story and which might not be? I wonder what you might include in your szopki if you were to design one?
Fri 5 th	South American Countries of Mexico and Bolivia	Compassion Bolivian Nativity https://youtu.be/GZWXrWfZwWc?si=wGfjgtRSCQTlkdg-	I wonder how these children are sharing the joy of the Christmas story? In this cultural retelling of the Nativity, I wonder what's the same as the version you know? I wonder what might be different, and why? I wonder what you might want to ask the children who have retold the story? I wonder which things Mary might have 'stored in her heart'? Now look at the image – I wonder what connections you might find with the video?
Sat 6 th	Joy Across the Globe	Duncan Yare Jingle bells in 20 languages https://youtu.be/1LkcpS-Surk?si=8NzSPsk-Z1pUYqIT	As you look at the image, I wonder how the artist helps us to focus on Jesus? As you listen to the song, I wonder which of these 20 countries you might want to visit? Can you pick out any words that you know as you listen?
Sun 7 th	United States of America	Ice Nativity Scene Texas AMAZING NATIVITY ICE SCULPTURE #shorts #nativity	The video for today is of a Nativity sculpture made entirely out of ice! Watch the video together first. I wonder which of the individual sculptures was the most difficult to create? I wonder what you might want to sculpt out of ice if you could? I wonder what links there might be between the sculpture and the image for today?
Mon 8 th	Kenya	Compassion Kenyan nativity https://youtu.be/KX_5dPONEWw?si=qB9mXnf0kJWAcy1	Watch the video first, before pondering the questions together: I wonder how these children are sharing the joy of the Christmas story? In this cultural retelling of the Nativity, I wonder what's the same as the version you know? I wonder what might be different, and why? I wonder what you might want to ask the children who have retold the story? Now look at the image – I wonder what connections you might find with the video?

Tue 9 th	India	South Tube Kanyakumari Christmas Crib https://youtu.be/TFBEk1-rYIs?si=kt0y1mXncf5c72ab	<p>The video for today is of a huge Christmas crib. It shows the 'Big Bible Story' up to and including Jesus' birth. As you watch, see if you can spot these Bible stories from the Old Testament. You may know many of them from our collective worships!</p> <p><i>Creation and the garden of Eden</i> <i>Abraham & the stars in the sky</i> <i>Joseph being put in the well by his brothers</i> <i>Joseph in prison</i> <i>Joseph and the Pharaoh</i> <i>Moses in the basket</i> <i>The 10 plagues that God sent on Egypt</i> <i>Moses crosses the Red Sea</i> <i>Manna in the desert (with real Indian wildlife!)</i> <i>The fiery furnace</i> <i>Daniel in the lions' den</i></p> <p>If you want to start at the nativity story, start at 4.41</p> <p>Some questions to ponder: I wonder why the creators of this experience chose to include so many other Bible stories? I wonder how this might help people to understand connections with the Big Bible Story?</p>
Wed 10 th	England	Wimbledon Village stables https://youtu.be/L-gz0DwTfdM?si=AuK7i8M_55ybTOrm	<p>Look carefully at the painting together.</p> <p>Some questions to ponder: I wonder which part of the Nativity this is? I wonder where Baby Jesus might be? How do you know this? I wonder what you might want to ask the artist about her work? The nativity video for today is set in a real stable –how is this the same as / different from other versions we've viewed so far?</p>
Thur 11 th	United States of America	Remedy The Christmas Story Kids Perspective USA https://youtu.be/-s56Xa_C54I?si=9QwGlcxG8GamnXqS	<p>Look carefully at the painting together.</p> <p>Some questions to ponder: I wonder what you like about this painting? I wonder why the artist made it so tall? I wonder what the shepherds might be saying to one another? I wonder what you might include in a picture of this part of the story? As you watch the video, think about how these children have chosen to show the Nativity story using things that they have around them.</p>

Fri 12 th	Philippines	Compassion Philippine nativity https://youtu.be/DS_ew1z66pg?si=N6cycTvs8u4aW8n	Watch the video first, before pondering the questions together: I wonder how these children are sharing the joy of the Christmas story? In this cultural retelling of the Nativity, I wonder what's the same as the version you know? I wonder what might be different, and why? I wonder what you might want to ask the children who have retold the story? Now look at the image – I wonder what connections you might find with the video? Can you find the fish?!
Sat 13 th	Christmas around the Globe	Christmas around the world 2024 https://youtu.be/HFe6RrCaMzs?si=QhL3jGt3HK2ZFB5m	I wonder which of these festive traditions you would like to take part in? Maybe singing carols, creating paper lantern messages – or doing radish art carving?! I wonder what special traditions you might have in your own school? Do look at the beautiful artwork for today as well, showing some very unusual Nativity visitors!
Sun 14 th	Nepal	Christmas Ko Lahar - New Nepali Christmas dance song Milan Bhujel Asha Church 2024 https://youtu.be/4wEOjbBTt8Y?si=pQ70RBSbg4yw4HfD	Look carefully at this lovely Nativity set, crafted out of karma wood by Nepali artist Narayan Shilpakar. The owner of this nativity set writes. 'We commissioned this set from our Nepali friend Narayan Shilpakar, who is a professional artisan near Kathmandu, Nepal. Narayan is a Christian. The wood is a hardwood called karma wood in the Nepali language and 'hallu' in Narayan's native tongue.....Traditional Hindu art is mirrored throughout the piece in a blend of Christian and Hindu culture. Mary and Joseph have open palms facing baby Jesus, showing a sign of respect in Nepali culture; holding the palms out to someone is a way of sharing your light and spirit with them. A peaceful backdrop of trees, plants, and river completes the scene.' Now look carefully at the Nativity set - I wonder if you can see the artist's ideas? Today's video is a song from a Nepali-speaking church in Kentucky, USA. I wonder how this song might express Christmas joy? I wonder how traditional movements might have influenced the dance moves in the video?
Mon 15 th	England	All Saints Peckham Nativity on the overground https://youtu.be/f66Olrelhrc?si=gBuXO_89zhJWYfMp	This version of the Nativity was filmed at overground stations from Clapham to Peckham Rye. I wonder how this version of the Nativity had an impact on people on the platforms? I wonder which scene you might like to have been in? I wonder what a Nativity 'flashmob' like this might look like in your neighbourhood?!

			<p>Now look at the image carefully. This is the oldest piece of art in our calendar, dating from c.1480 and is part of a much larger tapestry, showing 4 scenes from the Nativity account.</p> <p>I wonder why it's been so important to artists across the ages, and across the world, to show the Nativity in so many different ways?</p>
Tue 16 th	Ireland	<p>Kilkenny Ireland RTE https://youtu.be/K-KFKMWZ8sk?si=YR9RIJzNmyi8uzDy</p>	<p>Look at the stone carving carefully before using the pondering questions together.</p> <p>I wonder if you can tell the Nativity story using the characters you can see on this carving?</p> <p>I wonder why Jesus is depicted in the centre of this piece of art?</p> <p>I wonder which section you like best and why?</p> <p>The video today was created by residents of Kilkenny, retelling the Nativity story. It beautifully shows diverse parts of the city and its culture.</p>
Wed 17 th	England and Scotland	<p>Grasmere Primary School https://youtu.be/URsGpU2XA3Y?si=yQ1cJAWEOwkTQ86W</p>	<p>This charming video is a longer retelling of the whole Nativity, at 17.29. If Gabriel visited Mary in February 2020... and if Mary and Joseph sought peace in Grasmere (in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, which some children might remember!) how might the Nativity story unfold? The children of Grasmere School have written and created this modern, Lake District version of a timeless tale. Enjoy!!</p> <p>Some questions to ponder:</p> <p>I wonder how this retelling is similar or different to your own school's Nativity this year?</p> <p>Now look at the image together – what's similar to or different from other Nativity art you've seen in this calendar?</p> <p>I wonder if you can spot the shepherd carrying bagpipes?!!</p>
Thur 18 th	Cameroon & Uganda	<p>Masaka Kids Africana Dancing Feliz Navidad - Merry Christmas https://youtu.be/c7swkiMsCwc?si=D84px0_1qpkmsUQU</p>	<p>As you watch this video together, which words in this joyful song really stand out for you?</p> <p>Thinking about all the images we have seen and the words we have heard since 1st December, I wonder which you think have best expressed Joy to the World?</p> <p>I wonder if they have helped us to understand a bit more why this story is so special to people all across the globe?</p> <p>I wonder what messages of joy you might like to share with others this Christmas time?</p> <p>I wonder how we might also try to be 'joy to the world'?</p>






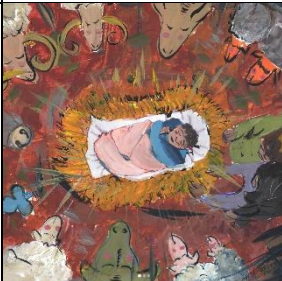


Fri 19 th	Diocese of Guildford	Video The Schools' Christmas Art Exhibition 2025 at Guildford Cathedral	<p>The Diocese of Guildford</p> <p>The theme of our school Christmas Art Exhibition this year is <i>Joy to the World!</i></p> <p>If your school contributed a piece of art, you may like to start by talking about it together. Then watch the video which shows all the artwork.</p> <p>I wonder where you noticed joy in the artwork in the video?</p> <p>I wonder if you all noticed the same things?</p> <p>I wonder if any of the artwork focussed on Jesus bringing joy to the whole world?</p> <p>Which countries and cultures did you see represented?</p> <p>The Diocese of Guildford Education Team wish you all a very Joyful and Happy Christmas!</p> <p>You can see these pieces of art for yourself at Guildford Cathedral, where they are on display until 2nd February 2026. The cathedral is free to visit. However, we advise that you check the cathedral diary in case there is a service or event taking place when you intend to visit. Guildford Cathedral - Cathedral Diary</p>
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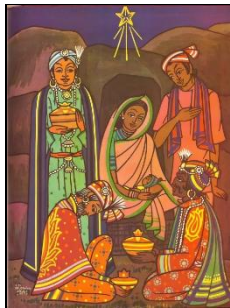
We recommend that teachers watch the videos using the links above before the pupils open the advent calendar to make sure that they are suitable for your pupils.
We reserve the right to change the videos because, our experience is that people release new Christmas materials in December, so if we come across something exciting, we may insert that video!

We hope you have a joyful time wondering about the images and videos in this calendar together.

Jane and Rachel

Images and source

1 st Introduction	2 nd Indonesia	3 rd New Zealand	4 th Poland
 <p>Kenyan Unknown https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56354</p>	 <p>Gede Sukana Kariana Indonesia The Jesus Question Tracing the identity of Jesus through history, art, and pop culture</p>	 <p>Ku Bailey Māori Madona and Child Paintings of the Nativity From Around the World – BAME Anglican https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56568</p>	 <p>Polish Folk Art called Wycinanki Made from cutting paper http://www.internationalities.com/wycinanki-nativity/</p>
5 th South American countries of Mexico and Bolivia	6 th Jamaica / Global	7 th United States America	8 th Kenya
 <p>Mary Jane Miller Mexico https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59674https://freebibleimages.org/photos/elijah-widow/</p>	 <p>Liz Valente Manger https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59334</p>	 <p>Mikhail Zarovny has roots in Ukraine and Russia</p>	 <p>Elimo Njau The Jesus Question Tracing the identity of Jesus through history, art, and pop culture</p>
9 th India	10 th England	11 th United States of America	12 th Philippines



Sister Claire

[Global Christian Worship - Christmas Story Art from India \(Sr. Claire set 2\)](#)



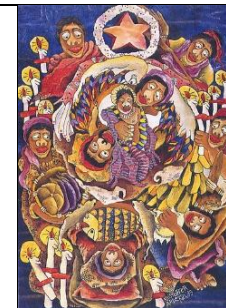
Dinah Roe Kendall

[Nativity Paintings from around the World | The Jesus Question](#)



Shepherds John August Swanson

<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58575>



Kristoffer Ardeña

[Nativity Paintings from around the World | The Jesus Question](#)

Info about this piece: [Christmas, Day 11: Maligayang Pasko! \(Merry Christmas\) – Art & Theology](#)

13th Arctic



USA

Native Nativity Susan Ringstad
[Native Nativity - Susan Ringstad Emery](#)

14th Nepal



Nativity scene from Nepal
Narayan Shilpakar

[Nepal 357. Karma Wood Holy Family - WORLD NATIVITY](#)

15th England



Medieval tapestry

[Art in the Christian Tradition:](#)

16th Ireland



Gerard Dillon

<https://www.whytes.ie/art/nativity/152386/>

17th Scotland

18th African Countries of
Cameroon and Uganda

19th The Diocese of Guildford



William Bell Scot

[The Nativity by William Bell Scott | National Galleries of Scotland](#)



Jesus Mafa Project

[Art in the Christian Tradition:](#)

Will be added after 1st December