

# Keeping the Christmas Season at Home

*December 25, 2019 – January 12, 2020*

# Christmas

## *Blessings & Prayers*

### *Christmas Daily Prayer*

That I will grow in faith  
during these days of joy:  
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

That my hope will increase  
during these days of grace:  
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

That I will be a living sign of love  
during these days of glory.  
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

### *Table Prayer for the Christmas Season*

The Word became flesh.  
*The Word became flesh.*

Let this meal nourish us  
to live in service to others  
as we celebrate your dwelling among us,  
O Christ.

*The Word became flesh.*

May the food of this table strengthen us  
to share the good news  
brought to earth by the voice of  
herald angels.

*The Word became flesh.*

Grant that this will be a season of peace,  
so others will see your love in us  
first shown in your humble birth.

*The Word became flesh.*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Bless this meal, bless our lives  
during these joyful Christmas days.  
Amen.

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### *Epiphany House Blessing*

*Items needed: chalk and a small bottle of holy water. Gather with family members, friends, and perhaps some neighbors at the front door.*

Leader: In the (+) name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The main doorway is signed*  
[20 + C + M + B + 20]

Let us pray: *Christus mansionem benedicat.*  
May Christ bless this house. Amen.

Leader (or other Reader): A reading from the book of Revelation. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people."

The Word of the Lord                      ALL: Thanks be to God!

*Each room is sprinkled with holy water.*

*Living room:*

Lead us to live with you on high.  
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

*Kitchen:*

You have prepared a banquet for us.  
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

*Dining room:*

You feed us at that heavenly banquet.  
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

*Bedrooms:*

In you alone do we rest secure.  
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

*Bathroom:*

You cleanse us from the stain of sin.  
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

*All return to the front door to pray together.*

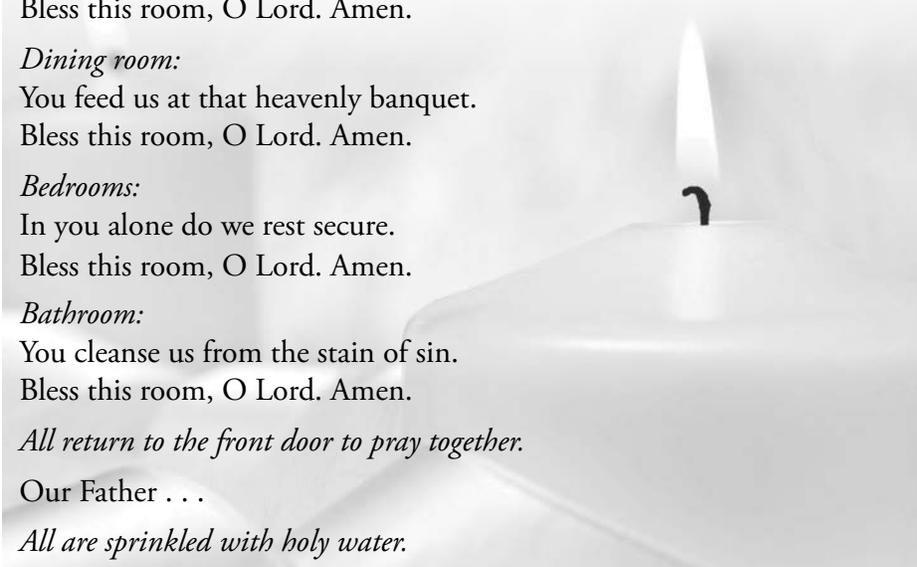
Our Father . . .

*All are sprinkled with holy water.*

Bless this household through all days to come, Father, Son,  
and Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

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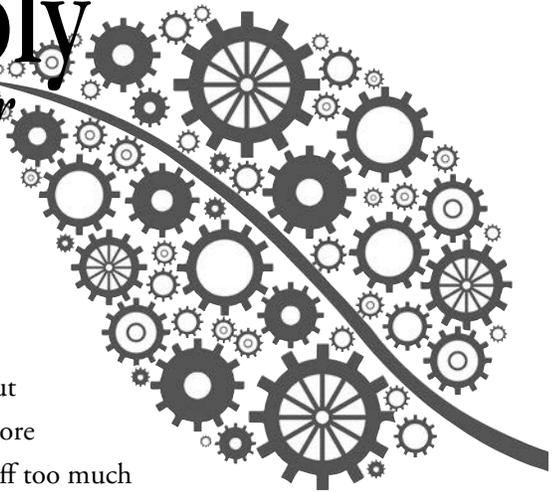
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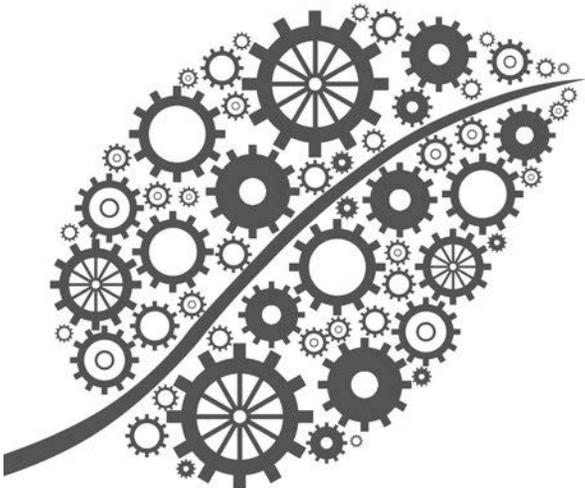
# *Living* **Sustainably** *in the New Year*

Since the moment God “took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it” (Genesis 2:15), humanity has been entrusted with the care of creation. But the pace of modern life is frantic, and we rarely have time to consider our choices—especially in an economic system that depends on consumption, and a lot of it.

This year, make a commitment as a family to be more intentional about stewardship of creation. Here is a list of low-cost ideas for living smaller and more sustainably. Go slowly! Nothing destroys good intentions as quickly as biting off too much at once.



1. Take your own bags to the grocery store.
2. Plan errands to coincide with other activities so you can combine trips and avoid having to come and go from home multiple times in a day.
3. Buy local foods; less transport means less environmental impact.
4. Grow your own vegetables or fruits; plant a tree or two.
5. Compost kitchen waste, leaves, and grass clippings.
6. Wash and reuse resealable bags.
7. Bring home fast-food plastics (cups, utensils, trays) to wash and recycle—or better yet, reuse.
8. Turn off the car instead of idling while waiting in pickup lines, outside kids’ activities, or while checking your phone.
9. Turn off electronics after a certain hour, or for a full evening each week: computers, tablets, phones, televisions . . . Read a book, institute family game night, or take a walk and get to know your neighbors.
10. Buy bulk refills of cleaning products instead of a new pump bottle every time.
11. When shopping for school or work clothes, start at consignment stores and fill in as necessary with new clothing.
12. Turn the lights off when you leave the room; put the computer to sleep when not in use.
13. Adjust the thermostat in the house up a degree or two in summer, down a degree or two in winter.
14. Go through kids’ school folders to find papers with blank back sides that can be used for printing.
15. Replace parts of your lawn with native plants—wildflowers, low-maintenance ground cover, and so on—so mowing takes less time and uses less energy.



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