



Advent Buddies

1. Share Your Bread

This is something anyone in the parish can initiate! Gather ingredients and plan to bake two loaves of bread with your family—one for you and one for a neighbor or another family or individual in the parish. (This could even be done within faith-formation or Catholic school classes.) Include a friendly note, a promise of prayer for them, your bread recipe, and the invitation to “pay it forward” to another family or individual from the parish. Your parish staff should be able to assist with names and addresses for delivery. Now that connection has been made, reach out again to continue to build community.

2. Pass the Pie

Invite parish members to participate through a sign-up in order to ensure commitment. Create a pie circle of ten people. Provide names and addresses for delivery. Select one person in each circle to begin. Tell that person to choose a recipe, gather ingredients, and bake a pie of their choice to deliver to the next person on the list in the pie circle. Have them include a friendly note, a promise of prayer, a copy of the recipe followed, and the reminder to bake a pie in the same pie plate for the next person/family on the list. Now that connection has been made, reach out again to continue to build community.

3. Neighborhood Luminaries

During this season of light, invite your entire neighborhood to participate in a night of peace. Select a night and create invitations. Hand deliver them with directions on how to create a paper-bag luminary. Invite each household to decorate their bag with a quote, prayer, or symbols for peace. Publicize the evening within your community for people to come and walk through. At the onset of the tradition of luminaries in the Catholic Church, it was believed that the lights would guide the spirit of the Christ child to people’s homes. Luminaries are a beautiful tradition that can really bring a neighborhood together. You can find many sites online for organizing a night of luminaries.



4. Works of Mercy

Families can pay attention to those families who've just lost a loved one within the parish (upcoming funeral Mass), families whose babies are preparing for Baptism, couples preparing for marriage, or members who are sick or homebound (parish staff can help with these), and engage their own family by preparing a Basket of Love, filled with items to celebrate the season, for delivery.

- To care for the homeless, backpacks can be filled with warm items, like mittens or gloves, handwarmers, a scarf, a fleece blanket, and a \$10 bill or gift card for a local coffee shop, to be left at a local park with a visible note that these backpacks are for the homeless to take for warmth. Include an encouraging and hopeful note and a prayer.
- Select a day for your family to go and clean some headstones and placards in need of care at the cemetery.
- Provide a meal, or make some soup, for a family who has a loved one who is sick. Do some yard work for them or offer to help with needed errands.
- Help out or donate to charities that give Christmas presents to children whose parents are in prison.
- Give alms to the poor by giving up a simple luxury and donating that money, at the end of the season, to Catholic Charities or another charity of your choice.

5. Host a parish game night over a video call!

Sign-ups would be required so that the group isn't too large. (You may offer a few different nights, to accommodate for all who would like to call in and play.) Select a game that is conducive to a video call—these are easily researched online. Conclude the evening by praying together.

**Find even more ideas
at smp.org/advent**