

The Jesse Tree

What is a Jesse Tree?

A Jesse Tree represents the family tree of Jesus Christ. Each ornament represents a story from the Bible that tells about God's people before Jesus was born. Each story shows God's salvation plan and tell how He guided humanity to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

The tradition of the Jesse Tree dates back to the Middle-Ages. The name "Jesse Tree" comes from Isaiah 11:1, "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit." Jesse is the father of King David. The savior was to come from David's family line.

What is the tradition?

During the Advent season, a Bible Story is read which relates to Jesus family or God's people. After the Bible story is read and discussed, an ornament is placed on a tree – the Jesse Tree. This was often done from the beginning of Advent to Christmas Day.

Traditionally the Bible stories corresponded with the readings from Daily Mass so the number of ornaments and the stories that were read changed from one year to the next. This meant that new Jesse Tree ornaments needed to be created each Advent. Because of this, there are many versions of the Jesse Tree. Our version does not follow along with the daily Mass readings, but our version was created to be simple and easy to use at home and in the classroom. Ours begins on Dec. 1, continues until Dec. 25, and it can be used the same way every year.



Creating a Jesse Tree

You will need:

- ◆ printable ornaments - printed on stock paper
- ◆ colored pencils or crayons
- ◆ cutting tools: scissors or 2 ½ hole punch
- ◆ a tree - see tree instructions
- ◆ hanger material – one of these: string and needle, tape, tack-putty, stapler, or metal hooks
- ◆ a Bible



What tree should I use?

You may like to hang your Jesse tree ornaments on your Christmas tree or you can create a tree just for these ornaments. If you want to create a tree, there are many different ways to accomplish this. For example: create a tree shape from paper and attach it to a wall (use tack-putty) or add a paper tree to a large bulletin board. You could also create a tree with evergreen branches or bare sticks and branches. Use an indoor ficus tree or branches from a craft store. The options are countless. Just look around and see what works for you in your situation.

How do I create the ornaments?

With these printable ornaments, the Jesse Tree can be a fun, easy craft! A group of children can divvy-up the ornaments and they can all color some! After the ornaments are colored, cut them out. A 2 ½ inch hole-punch is the perfect size to use on these circles! That would make this cutting job very quick and easy!

How do I hang them?

If you plan to hang these on a 3D tree, use a needle and thread to sew a short piece of thread through the top. Knot the two ends together. Then use the thread-loop to hang this on your tree. You could also attach metal hooks to the ornaments. If your tree is flat (on a wall or bulletin board) you can tape, tack-putty, or staple the ornaments to the tree.

Jesse Tree Scripture Readings

Each day from Dec. 1 to Dec. 25 read the Bible story and discuss it. Then add the corresponding ornament to the tree.

- December 1 - Creation:** Genesis 1:1-31; 2:1-4 Symbol: earth
- December 2 - Adam and Eve:** Genesis 2:7-9, 15-25; 3:1-24 Symbol: apple
- December 3 - Noah:** Genesis 6:5-19; 7:16-24; 8:1, 6-11,15-22 Symbol: ark
- December 4 - Babel:** Genesis 11:1-9 Symbol: tower
- December 5 - Abraham:** Genesis 12:1-7, 15:1-6 Symbol: mountain / night sky
- December 6 - Isaac:** Genesis 22:1-14 Symbol: ram on altar
- December 7 - Jacob:** Genesis 25:19-34; 28:10-18 Symbol: ladder
- December 8 - Joseph:** Genesis 37:23-28; 45:1-15 Symbol: tunic
- December 9 - Moses:** Exodus 3:1-10 Symbol: burning bush
- December 10 - Israelites:** Exodus 20:1-17 Symbol: Ten Commandments
- December 11 - Joshua:** Joshua 5:13-15; 6:1-20 Symbol: 3 horns and wall
- December 12 - Gideon:** Judges 6: 11-12,16-23;7:1-22 Symbol: horn and torch
- December 13 - Samson:** Judges 16:4-31 Symbol: hair and scissors
- December 14 - Ruth:** Ruth 1:1-19; 2:1-20; 4:13-17 Symbol: wheat
- December 15 - Samuel:** 1 Samuel 3:1-18 Symbol: lamp
- December 16 - Jesse:** 1 Samuel 16:1-13 Symbol: sheep & shepherd's staff
- December 17 - David:** 1 Samuel 17:12-51 Symbol: slingshot
- December 18 - Solomon:** 1 Kings 3:5-28 Symbol: scale of justice
- December 19 - Elijah:** 1 Kings 18:1-46 Symbol: fire & altar
- December 20 - Jonah:** Jonah 1:1-16; 2:1-1; 3:1-10; 4:1-11 Symbol: whale
- December 21 - John the Baptist:** Luke 3:2-19 Symbol: shell and water
- December 22 - Joseph:** Matthew 1:18-24 Symbol: tools
- December 23 - Mary:** Matthew 1:18-24; Luke 1:26-38 Symbol: Mary and lilies
- December 24 - Wise men:** Matthew 2:1-12 Symbol: star and 3 men
- December 25 - Jesus:** Luke 2:1-6 Symbol: baby Jesus

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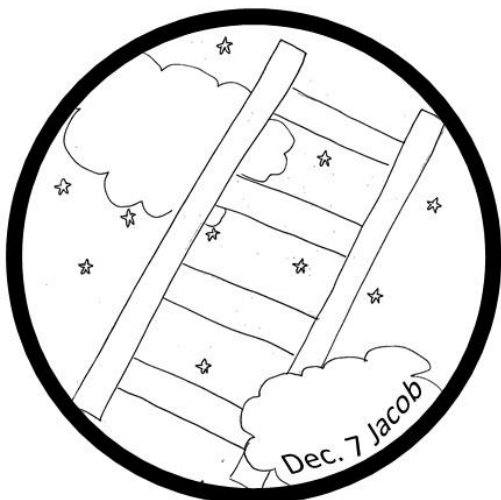
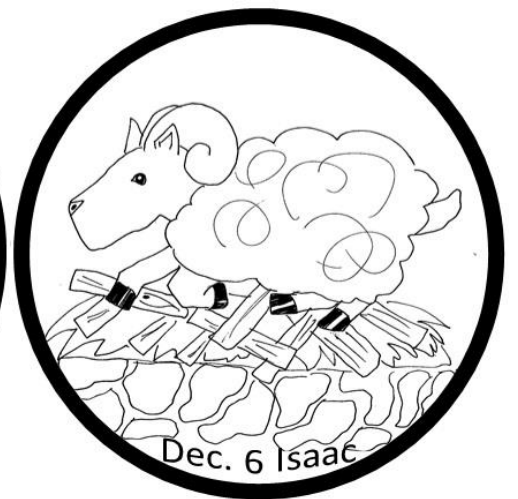
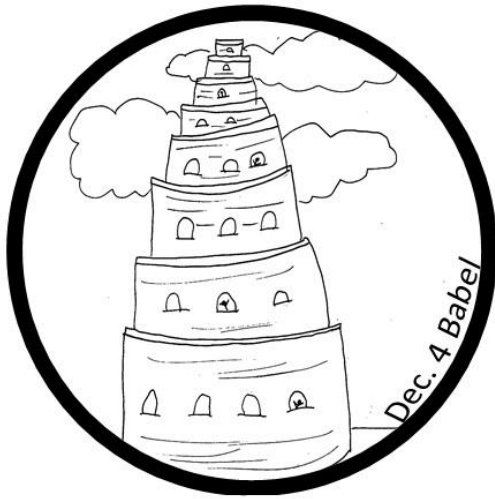
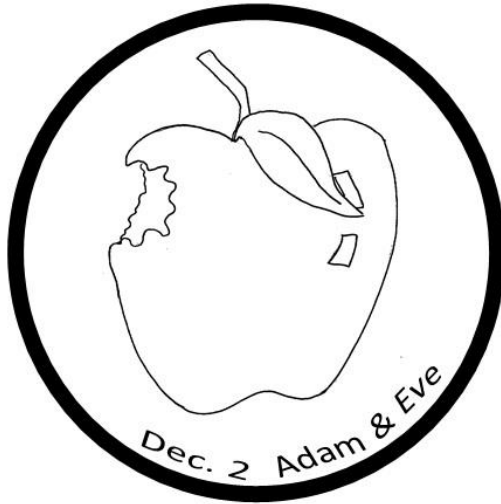
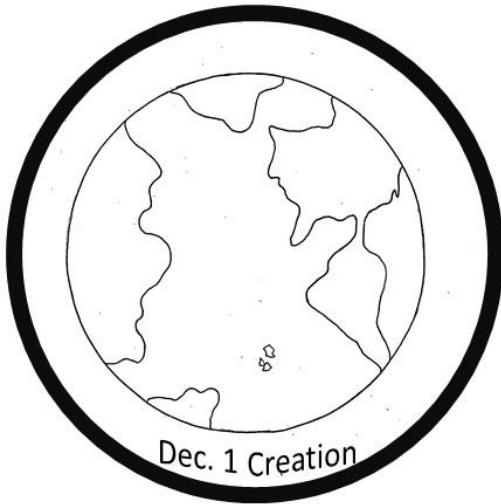
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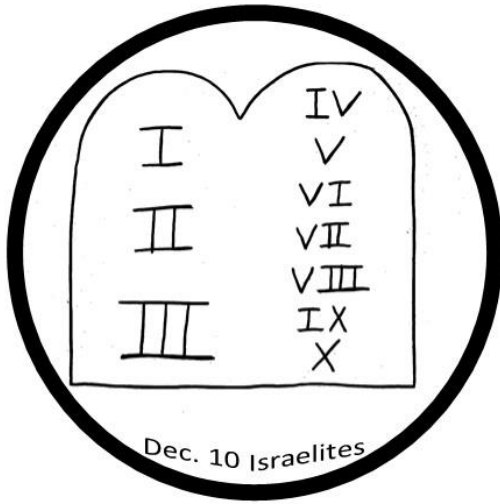
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Advent Jesse Tree Ornaments:





Dec. 10 Israelites



Dec. 11 Joshua



Dec. 12 Gideon



Dec. 13 Samson



Dec. 14 Ruth



Dec. 15 Samuel



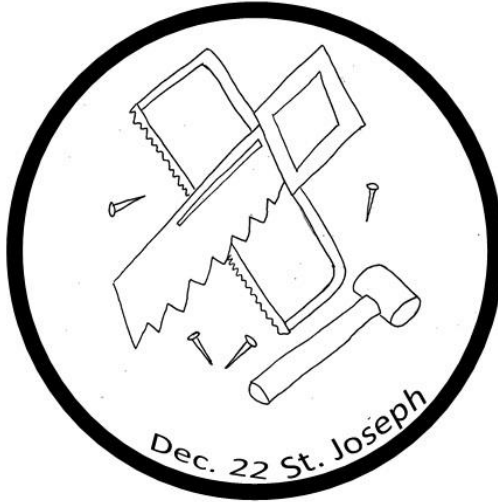
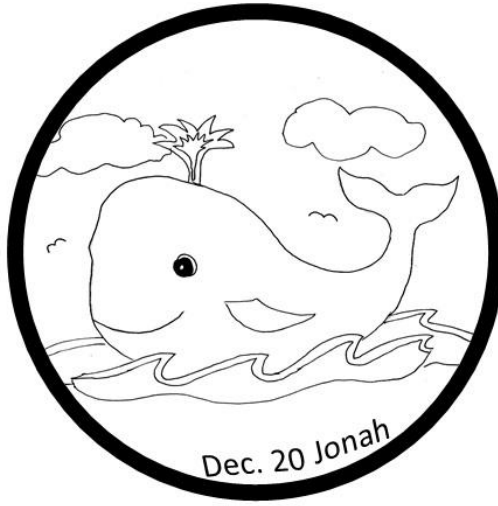
Dec. 16 Jesse



Dec. 17 David



Dec. 18 Solomon



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