



GodStart Gathers

Love, excitement, anticipation, celebration acceptance, faith, renewal



Advent presents a magical world of imagination and wonder for children. Through opening our hearts and minds to the richness of the rituals and symbols of advent we allow children to spark this imagination. As children grow they will want to share **their parent's** values and interpretation of life through action and language, spoken and unspoken. Spirituality and learning about God is closely woven with this very existence of love in a family. This provides the foundation for later faith development as their world expands and they come to know a loving and trustworthy God. The faith of children has sprung from these early experiences.

Angels have been messengers of special significance on many occasions. The Annunciation, with Archangel Gabriel announcing the "Good News" brought excitement and guidance to Mary and Joseph, embracing them with care and protection. The angels heralding the birth of baby Jesus, illuminate love, concern, wisdom, excitement, celebration, guidance and loyalty in Advent and in GodStart Gathers we present activities and reflections with GodStart that affirm and nurture these values.

Kind Regards *Melissa Keast* GodStart Project Coordinator



'If two of you agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.' (Mathew 18:19-20)



Mums just being together

Compassion, acceptance, concern, togetherness, faith, love, renewal



St Jude's Parish
Langwarrin Victoria

*From Carmelprint The Carmelite Nuns
Carmel of Mary and Joseph*

*It was a parenting group. One of the Mums, Gerry, shared her dismay that her husband had cancelled **their son's birthday party as punishment for getting into trouble at school.***

'He was already punished at school,' she said. 'He's only seven. I think it's over the top.' Everybody in the group agreed with her.

'Can you talk to your husband about it?' we asked.

'No way. He'd just say I was being weak. And this is why Danny gets into trouble. He needs Discipline.'

Suddenly one of the group asked, 'What time does your husband come home from work?' 'Half past five. Why?'

'Let's all think about Gerry's husband at half past five today!'

'Yes!' We quickly took up the idea. 'We'll send our vibes all together! We'll zap him!'

He won't know what hit him!

The following week, when we assembled again, we were eager to find out what happened. 'Tell us, Gerry! Did our vibes reach you?'

We all declared that we had, indeed, thought of her at half past five.

In a flat voice, Gerry said, 'he came home at half past two.'

'Oh no!' we shrieked.

Then, with a big grin, she said. 'As he walked in the door, he said 'you know, luv, I think I've been too hard on the boy. He should have his birthday party.'

*We could only look around in amazement before breaking into **howls of laughter.....It wasn't a religious group. We came together from different backgrounds. We hadn't spoken of prayer. But somehow, without realising it, we understood the power held in 'Jesus' promise. 'Where two or three of you agree on anything in my name, it will be done by my father in heaven.'** Obviously our concern for Danny and his Mum and Dad qualified as being 'in his name' and it was done by the one who is a compassionate father, and whose name is always now, regardless of our clocks! Rose*

During Advent, coming together and celebrating will open the door for children and families to experience the faith, love, wonder, greatness and the uniqueness of this eternal event. Sharing, compassion and acceptance within this season will not only provide the opportunity to reflect on this liturgical season together but experience the 'power of Jesus' as these Mums have experienced in their lives.