

## 12-Days of Christmas

Catholics in England during the period of 1558 and 1829, when Parliament finally emancipated Catholics in England, were prohibited from ANY practice of their faith by law—private OR public. It was a crime to BE a Catholic.

“The Twelve Days of Christmas” was written in England as one of the “catechism songs” to help young Catholics learn the tenets of their faith – a memory aid, when to be caught with anything in “writing” indicated adherence to the Catholic faith and could not only get you imprisoned, it could get you hanged.

The song gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of faith. Take the gift for the day (Beginning December 26<sup>th</sup>) and continue until Epiphany, the time we celebrate the arrival of the Wise Men to Bethlehem, read the scripture or complete the activity and see how much of your own faith you can see in the symbols.

To help you enjoy this time of Christmas, you will find a sheet at the end of the 12 days which will have the necessary These will work best if printed on card stock, and then colored or decorated. They can be placed on your Christmas tree or another location (like a door) if your tree is already down.

Day	Song Gift	Represents	Current Gift	Scripture or Activity
1st	Partridge in a Pear Tree	Jesus Christ	Fish Cross	Did you know? The fish was the mark of early Christians. The first believers did not dare to wear any mark of their faith. If they did so, they were often persecuted or killed. The Greek initials of “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Saviour” made up the Greek word for Fish. Early Christians sketched the sign of a fish as a sign to others that they were a Christian. Today, the Fish still stands as a symbol of a Christian.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Turtle Doves	Old and New Testament	Stone Tablets	Do you know how many books of the Bible there are in each Testament How many can you name? (Doesn’t have to be in order!)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	French Hens	Faith, Hope and Love	Anchor	1 Corinthians 13:1-13. How do you define faith? Hope? Love? Why do you think love would be considered the greatest? How many other scriptures can you recall which talk about love?
4 <sup>th</sup>	Calling Birds	The Gospels	Books	Do you know what books of the Bible they are? Why are they called Gospels? Gospels means “good news.” In the New Testament, it refers to the good news preached by Jesus that the kingdom of God is at hand.
5 <sup>th</sup>	Golden Rings	The first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, which gives the history of man’s fall from grace.	Scroll	Can you name the books of the Pentateuch? The Pentateuch tells the story – our creation, sin, judgment and redemption. Light you candle and share a small part of your story.
6 <sup>th</sup>	Geese a laying	6 days of creation	Day of creation ornament	Read Genesis 1:1 – 2:25. Which version of creation do you prefer? Why?
7 <sup>th</sup>	Swans a	7 Gifts of the Holy	Dove	Read Isaiah 11. All 7 gifts became ours

	swimming	Spirit  The #7 probably represented completeness and perfection		through the infilling of the Holy Spirit when we were confirmed. (1) Knowledge – enables us to see that knowledge of God is the most important knowledge there is. (2) Understanding – makes the meaning of what we learn about God clear to us so that we understand what it means to put God first in our lives. (3) Wisdom – enables us to use our understanding of God for the benefit of others. Wisdom is understanding with love. (4) Holy Fear – implants in us a reverence for God and His commandments. Holy fear is our awareness of God’s presence in us and His awareness of us, which makes us more likely to watch what we think, say and do. (5) Counsel – puts us in a two-way communication with God so he can guide us in our daily lives. (6) True Godliness – makes us desire to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. (7) Godly Strength – enables us to triumph over temptation and to persist.
8 <sup>th</sup>	Maids milking	The 8 Beatitudes	Beehive	Matthew 5:1-11 (Also known as the Sermon on the Mount) Beatitude means “blessed”. They are declarations or pronouncements that confer an end time blessing on persons who are characterized by what they are (poor) or what they do (peacemakers).
9 <sup>th</sup>	Ladies Dancing	The 9 Fruits of the Holy Spirit	Fruits	Galatians 5:22-23. Fruits are defined as a result or outcome.
10 <sup>th</sup>	Lords a Leaping	The 10 Commandments	Heart	How many can you name? See Exodus 20:1-7. Did you know the 10 Commandments are found a second time in the Bible? See Deuteronomy 5:6-21. Who did God give the law to? What do we learn from these Commandments? (See page 847 of the Book of Common Prayer)
11 <sup>th</sup>	Pipers Piping	The 11 Faithful Apostles	Sandal	What is an Apostle? The definition means “one who is sent out.” A personal messenger or envoy, commissioned to transmit the message or otherwise carry out the instructions of the commissioning agent. What is the purpose of the Apostle’s Creed? (See page 852 of the Book of Common Prayer). Do we have apostles today? (See page 855 of the Book of Common Prayer). Matthew 10:2-3
12 <sup>th</sup>	Drummers Drumming	The 12 points of the doctrine of the Apostle’s Creed	Popsicle star	Read the Apostles Creed in the Book of Common Prayer. See if you can find the 12 points.

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## Activities by day

1. Fish cross [https://www.pinterest.com/pin/365917538455208430/?nic\\_v2=1a6ohMqtO](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/365917538455208430/?nic_v2=1a6ohMqtO)

Materials – 1 sheet of paper, any color or thickness, 8 ½ x 11

Scissors

Ruler

Pencil

Glue – Fast drying, glue gun, or tape

Using the ruler, mark ¾" on the short side of the pages and connect the lines

Mark and cut 5 strips of paper

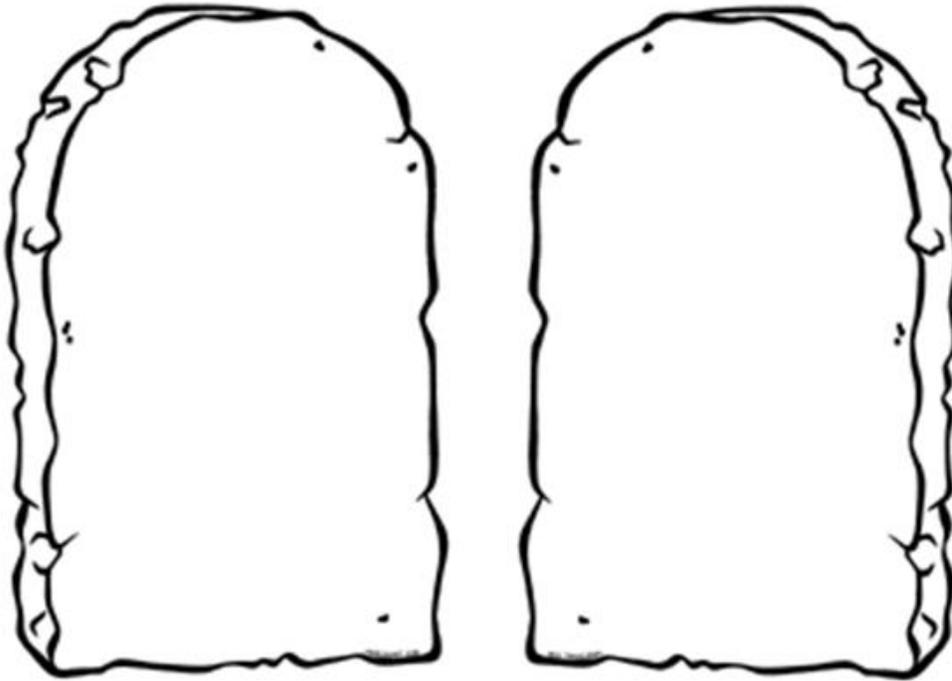
1 ¼" from the end, cut one slice. The other end of the paper will fit in there to make the tail.

Prepare all the fish.

Using glue, form cross as shown in above link.

When complete, hang on your tree or wall.

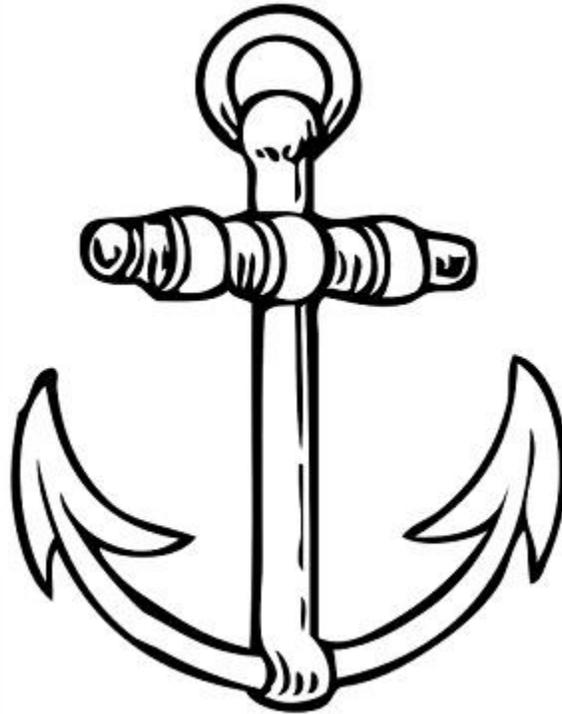
2. Cut out these two stones, one for Old Testament (stories that were written before Jesus) and New Testament (stories written of Jesus' birth and how the disciples grew the faith. You



You can write Old Testament and New Testament on the stone tablets and decorate. This should be hung on your tree or wall.

3. Faith is seen as the cross, hope is the barbs on the end of the anchor pointing back to heaven. Love is seen as a heart in the center, right under the cross piece. The anchor needs a heart on it.

Cut out, decorate and add to tree or wall.

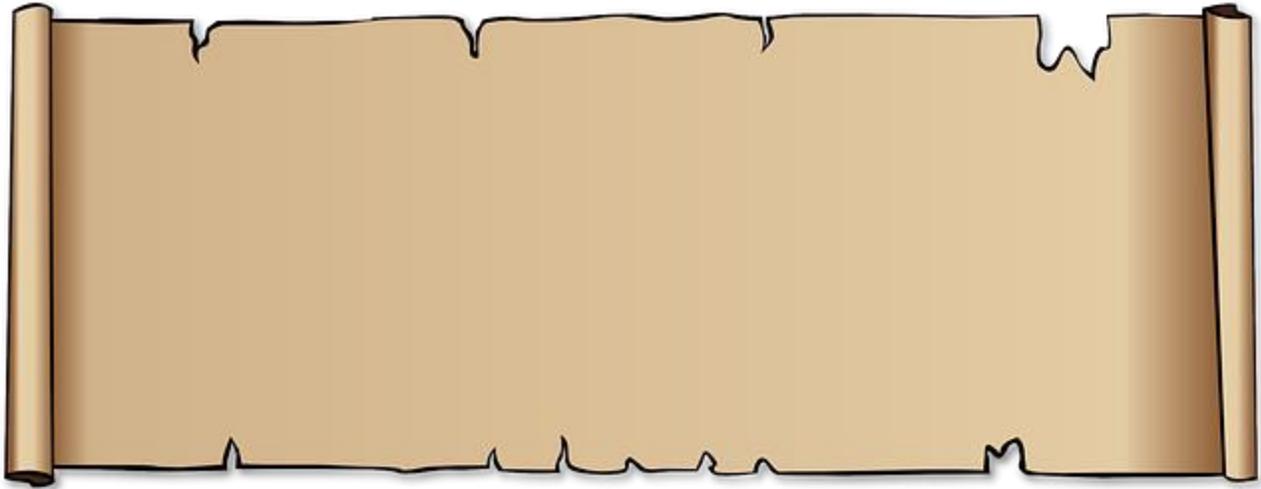


4. There are 4 books called the Gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They are the first 4 books of the New Testament. They tell stories of the Birth of Jesus and his life and ministry. They were written for different groups of people, who were living in the region.

Get the names on each of the books, in order,  
Cut out and hang on your tree or wall.



5. The books of the Old Testament as found in the Jewish tradition are written on written on animal skins. The Torah scrolls are entirely handwritten in Hebrew by a sofer (scribe. It can take up to 18 months to complete the whole process from the complex preparation of the animal skins to the writing of the final words. Use this link and write the names of the first 5 books of the Bible on this scroll.

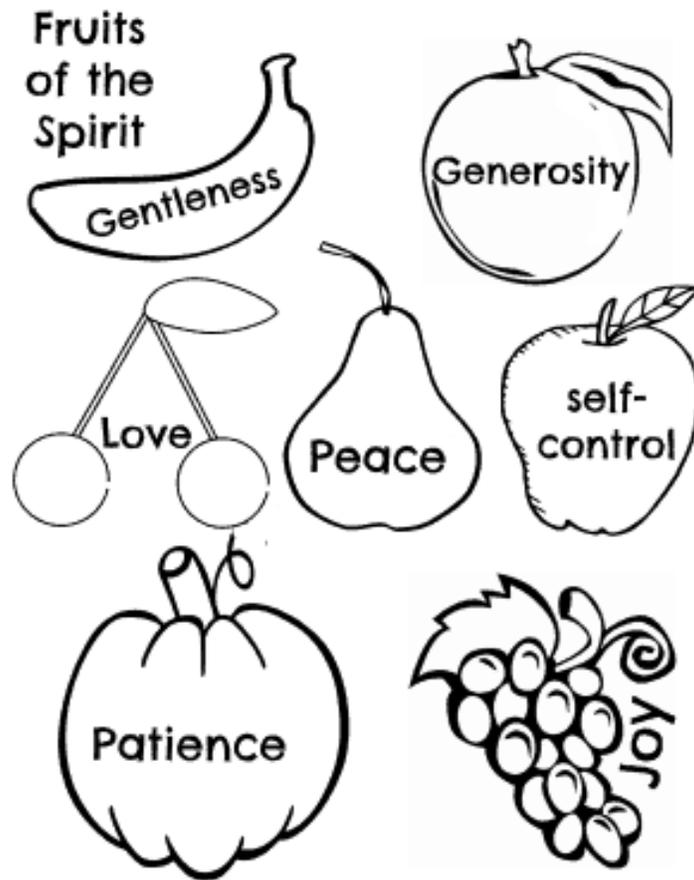


6. I wonder which day of creation you like best? I wonder if one of the days could have been left out? God calls the creation of man “very good.” I wonder why? This link will take you to a coloring page for the days of creation. Pick the date you like best, cut, color and decorate, and add to the tree.  
<https://tinyurl.com/y2oxil9t>
7. When we think of Confirmation, an image used is that of a dove coming down from heaven.  
<https://tinyurl.com/yy8bj4m7> with walk you through making a paper plate dove.



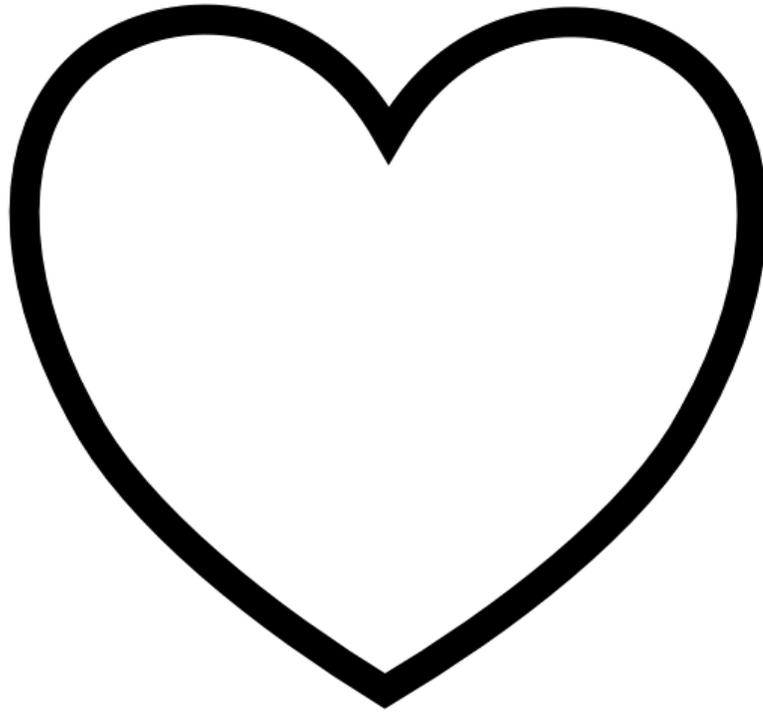
8. This “bee” hive to help is remember the beatitudes and that all are blessed.

9. Pick which fruit you would like to have. Cut, color, decorate, and hang.



10. The 10 Commandments

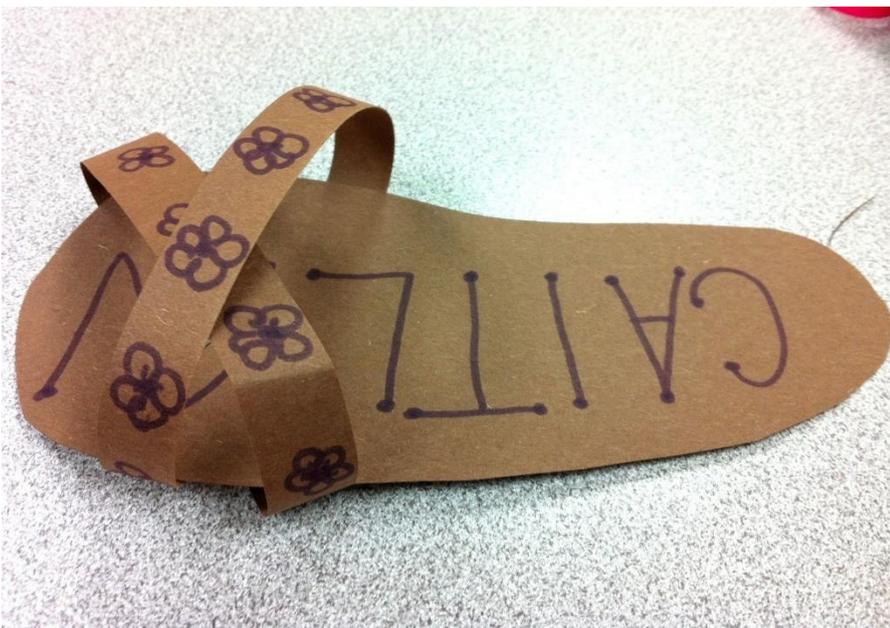
As you learn about the commandments, they fall into two categories – Love God and Love People.



Using the heart above in the red box, make your own heart showing how the 10 Commandments are categorized. You will draw one line horizontally and the one down the center to the top of the first line.

## 11. Sandal

The sandal craft reminds us that these men and women who helped support them did much walking to spread the good news. Trace your child's footprint on a piece of brown or tan construction paper. Do not go between the toes but around them. Cut out two pieces of brown paper to represent the sandal straps. They should be the same length. Criss-cross the two brown strips and staple or hot glue the shoe sole. Have your child write their name and date.



Trace your child's foot off on brown paper or cardboard.

Cut out sole.

Cut 2 strips from paper.

Decorate the sandal, including child's name and date. Sandal can be decorated with scrap papers, beads, etc.

12. The Apostles Creed (Symbolum Apostolorum) was developed between the second and ninth centuries. It was the most popular creed used in worship by Western Christians. Its central doctrines are those of the Trinity and God the Creator.

Legend has it that the Apostles wrote this Creed on the 10<sup>th</sup> day after Christ's ascension into heaven. That is not the case, although the name stuck. However, each of the doctrines found in the creed can be traced to statements current in the apostolic period. The earliest written version of the creed is perhaps the Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus (ca. A.D. 215) The current form is first found in the writings of Caesarius of Arles (d 532).

The creed was apparently used as a summary of Christian doctrine for baptismal candidates in the churches in Rome. Hence, it became known as The Roman Symbol. As in Hippolytus' version, it was given in question and answer format with the baptismal candidates answering in the affirmative that they believed each statement.

1. I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
3. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. Under Pontius Pilate, He was crucified, died, and was buried.
5. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and the life everlasting.

Using popsicle sticks, you can make a 12-point star to go at the top of all the other items on your tree/door.  
<https://www.craftynest.com/2009/12/giant-craft-stick-snowflakes/>

If you make the star below, glue 12 beads or jewels to remind us of the 12 parts.

