

# Children and Youth

**Pray that children and youth may always be safe.**



Two thousand years ago, halfway around the world, a tiny baby was born. He was born in a stable, because there was no room for his parents at the inn.

Sometimes we forget that once Jesus was a child. He is the Son of God, but he was also a helpless baby. Mary and Joseph had to teach Jesus how to walk and talk. They had to feed him, dress him, and keep him safe. That's what adults are supposed to do.

Even thousands of years after Jesus was born, kids still need the same things. Sadly, though, not all kids get what they need.

Many children throughout the world don't have enough to eat, clean water to drink, or homes to shelter them from the cold and storms. Other children are in danger of violence, from wars or even from members of their own families.

Pope Benedict is asking us to pray that children and youth everywhere may always be safe. The Holy Father knows that Jesus loves children very much. In the Bible, Jesus asks children to come near him. Jesus tells all his followers to be like children - trusting, loving, and innocent.

Kids have an important place in the Church and in teaching others about Jesus. That's why our prayers are so important this Christmas. When we see Jesus lying in the manger, surrounded by animals, we also see Mary and Joseph watching over him. Whenever you look at a nativity scene, let it remind you of all the children who don't have someone watching over them, and say a prayer.

## ***Think about it!***

- Who took care of Jesus when he was a baby?
- What do kids need?
- How do we know that Jesus loves children?

# Printable Nativity

Here's a printable nativity set for you to make at home (from catholicicing.com)

You will need:

- About 13 toilet paper tubes
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Crayons
- Printed coloring sheets

<http://catholicicing.com/2009/12/diy-printable-nativity-for-kids/>

Instructions:

- Print the coloring pages:  
<http://catholicicing.com/2009/12/diy-printable-nativity-for-kids/>
- Color with crayons
- Cut out as indicated on the sheets
- Glue around toilet paper tubes with a glue stick. For most, just glue the bottom of the drawing even with the bottom of the toilet paper tube.
- For the angel, let her wings flap free where you cut them at the dotted line, then curl them out a little bit with your finger.
- When gluing the empty stable, just glue each edge to a toilet paper tube halfway around.
- When gluing the palm tree, let the leaves you cut on the dotted line flap free so they stand out.

