

The Empty Manger

You will need:

- [A manger](#)/toy cot/a decorated shoebox
- Some straw

Place your manger and your bundle of straw somewhere you will notice it regularly throughout advent.

The reflection

While looking at the manger, **think** of God's Son as an innocent and vulnerable baby in the manger. **Think** of that cold night, the strange place and the hard manger.

How can we prepare the manger for Jesus so that He will be welcome, warm, comfortable and safe?



Close your eyes, imagine that night: what it would have smelt like, how dirty it would have been, how cold it would have been.

The empty manger reminds us that during Advent we too need to prepare ourselves so that at Christmas our hearts are a welcome and warm “manger” for Jesus.

Think about how we prepare the manager of our hearts?

The straw will represent our good deeds. Good deeds can be things like being more helpful at home, being kind to our brothers or sisters, and helping without asking.

Talk together about the good deeds you could do during Advent.



As you do these good deeds, **add small bunches** of hay into the manger, slowly filling it up.

By the end of advent, the manger will be fully and ready for Jesus. Perhaps you could add a figure or something to represent Jesus on Christmas morning.