

COMPASSION CHRISTMAS CRAFT



We would like to suggest to you a very inexpensive craft you can make together as a family. It can be used as an advent tool to focus the whole family on the aspect of giving to Jesus our love and service in gratitude for God's amazing gift of love to us.

It is called in some places the

GIVING MANGER.

As followers of Jesus we all strive to keep a clear focus on the giving to others, and the grateful receiving from others during the Christmas season. Here is a way to focus each day on what each of us has done to give to others in Jesus' name, and things that have brought Him joy.

Each day each child and adult looks for acts of love and compassion to do for others. Every evening at dinner or at bedtime, each person takes a piece of straw, names the loving things they have done that day, and lays that piece of straw in the manger representing each thing – preparing a soft bed in which to lay Baby Jesus on Christmas Eve.



There is a kit that can be purchased for \$39.95 which includes a story book, but it is not necessary at all to spend that kind of money.

<https://compassionradio.com/thegivingmanger>



But the items can be purchased from any craft store for less than \$5.

You will need

1) 7" Craft Sticks

(We are supplying links where you can purchase on-line in case you are not able to get out to purchase.)

<https://comassionradio.com/woodcraftsticks>

(If you are incredibly gifted, you could make the manger out of real sticks.)

<https://compassionradio.com/woodlogsticks>

2) Raffia (or real straw trimmed to size, or yarn),

<https://compassionradio.com/raffia>

3) Wooden Bead for Baby Jesus Head

<https://compassionradio.com/roundwoodbeads>

4) 4 or 5 Cotton Balls

5) White fabric square (any fabric or napkin.

<https://compassionradio.com/whitenapkins>

6) Glue gun

<https://compassionradio.com/gluegun>

7) Glue Stick

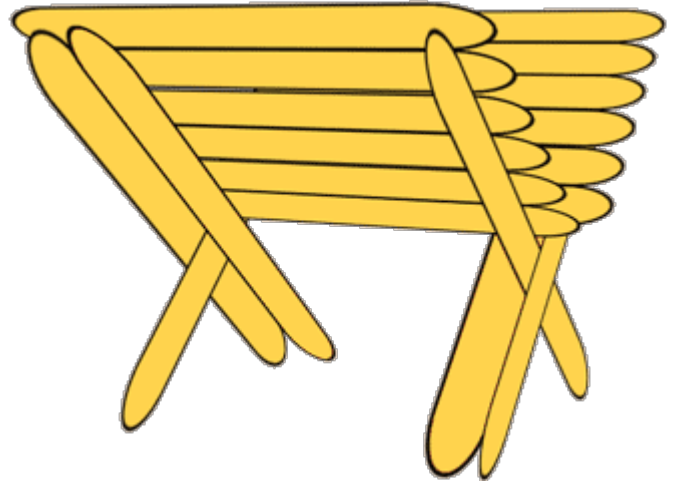
<https://compassionradio.com/gluesticks>

8) Sharpie Marker

<https://compassionradio.com/sharpie>

DIRECTIONS

With glue gun, (parents need to do this to avoid children burning themselves on the hot glue) glue 2 sections of 5 craft sticks together side by side. Then attach to 4 crisscrossed craft sticks. You may make the manger as wide and as deep as you choose.



Trim pieces of raffia, straw or yarn to lengths that match the manger. Tie them together in a little bundle to lay beside the manger.

Glue the large wooden bead to a cluster of cotton balls which will form the body of the Baby Jesus.

Use the cloth or napkin for the swaddling of the Baby Jesus. Put a dot of glue on the top of the bead and attach a corner of the to the top of the "head." Wrap the fabric around the "body" in any way you choose and put dots of glue wherever necessary to secure the swaddling. With the Sharpie, draw the eyes and mouth on the bead for the face.



Put Baby Jesus away until Christmas Eve, when you will lay him in the lovely soft bed you have created for him through all your compassionate acts.

IDEAS FOR ACTS OF COMPASSION

- Help your children think of and write down kind things they can do for parents, grandparents, teachers, siblings and friends.
- Shop for a gift to give to a shelter for women and children.
- Visit a senior living home and hand out homemade cookies or cards.
- Write a letter to a lonely family friend.
- Send a card to troops stationed overseas.
- Take a cup of coffee or hot chocolate to a Salvation Army bell ringer.
- Make a small gift for a child in the long-term care wing of the children's hospital. Bring a homemade gift for the mother.
- Volunteer to serve a meal together as a family at a local homeless shelter.
- Donate GOOD QUALITY toys and clothing to an opportunity store.
- Raid the pantry for canned goods to donate to a food bank.
- Take a plate of cookies and a homemade Christmas card to your doctor's office, library, church office, and/or dentist office.
- Anonymously pay for the Santa photos of the person behind you in line at the mall.
- Pay for the order for the person behind you at a drive through restaurant. (Leave a Christmas Card with the cashier to give to the person.)
- Wear Christmas hats and take some doggie treats to your local shelter.

IN THE KITCHEN:

- Make Christmas cookies to share
- Make homemade caramel corn to share.
- Make chocolate-dipped pretzels with red and green sprinkles to share.
- Make gingerbread to share.

- Make snickerdoodles.
- Decorate a gingerbread (or graham cracker) house.
- Invite over a few friends for a cookie decorating party whose families are unable to do so.

FAITH-BASED ACTIVITIES:

- Take a friend or two to a “live” nativity scene.
- Invite neighbors to a candlelight church service.
- Read the Christmas story in the Bible to your children and their friends.
- Make and decorate a birthday cake for Jesus.
- Spend time on the floor acting out the Christmas story with little ones and their toys.
- Cut your lunch sandwiches into the shape of stars and talk about the original Christmas star.
- Write a letter to Jesus, thanking him for the gifts you received throughout the year.
- Make paper crowns and talk about the wise men and the gifts they brought Jesus.
- Visit a local farm and talk about what it must have been like for Mary and Joseph to have a baby in a stable.

We would love to hear from you about your experience with the Giving Manger. Please email us at Info@CompassionRadio.com when your Christmas season is through.