



## Advent

**Christmas** is a festive time of year for singing of carols and family celebrations. Many cultures celebrate this Season in a variety of ways. Although this 'special' time of year can be full of excitement and memories for many individuals, it can also be very stressful and full of anxiety. Financial burdens, family dynamics, loss of loved ones, and poor time management can make Christmas-time celebrations not so enjoyable. Does this sound a bit like you? Take a few minutes and consider a few 'new' ways to adapt traditional Christmas tasks and ways to take care of yourself so that you can make this wonderful time more enjoyable for YOU and those you LOVE:

- **Make your to-do list of things you would like to get done and schedule them into your ADVENT calendar.**
- **Set aside some time to write out those Christmas cards and purchase your Christmas gifts.**
- **Start planning and saving for Christmas in January so when the season comes around you do not feel financially strained. Plan for food and unexpected gifts.**
- **Pick names when gift-giving so you have only one person to buy for.**
- **Postpone discussing family issues to another time, not during the celebration.**
- **Limit your intake of sweets and baked goods.**
- **Go for a walk or attend one of the exercise programs at St. Anthony.**
- **Listen to Christmas music or watch your favorite holiday movie.**
- **Volunteer on your own or with your family in your community.**
- **Schedule some "me" time and do something you enjoy.**
- **Plan your Christmas celebrations so you can allow for some down time.**

Taking time to prepare and plan ahead, you can reduce some of the pressures we all feel during this wonderful Season.

Aside from these *common sense* ways to capture the excitement of the Christmas season, remember the most important focus should be on JESUS! Keeping the 'special' excitement and anticipation alive in your home will make this year's Christmas and New Year Holiday celebrations more meaningful and much more enjoyable for you and your family. Reflect on your expectations for the holiday season; SIMPLE can be better.