

# Cuddling the Christ Child



## Family Based Catechesis Night Activity-**January 4, 2012**

Artists through the centuries have been captivated by the image of Mary cradling Baby Jesus in her arms. It is an image that reminds us of the miracle of love. Tonight you will help make a miracle of love for a small child, like Jesus, who is in need.

Our family project again this year is a fleece tie blanket that will go to the children who come with their family to the St. Joseph Emergency Shelter. Every child who comes to the shelter is in need of comfort and our blankets will provide just that! When the children leave the shelter their blankets go with them to keep them covered and comforted. They are a reminder of God's love. Whenever we talk to the Shelter staff they ask us to please continue the project! What started out as a single project is now in its 5th year of bringing comfort to kids.

St. Joseph Emergency Shelter served nearly 300 family members last year and with the recent addition, doubled its size. With the expansion comes a greater need. It is the only shelter in the area that keeps families together. The shelter is designed to be a place where a family can come to get the short term help they need to get back on their feet. Our blanket project is part of the shelter's New Pillows project. See YouTube for an informative clip on the St. Joseph Emergency Shelter.

*Let's begin!*

## Project Cuddling the Christ Child Fleece Tie Blanket Instructions

### Supplies Needed:

A good pair of scissors

4" x 4" piece of cardboard

Masking tape

Two pieces of fleece fabric approximately 1 1/3 (1 1/2 or 2) yards each. Straight or safety pins, optional

### Directions:

Start with two complimentary pieces of fleece material that are the same size. We recommend 1 1/3 yards but you can make your blanket any size you like up to the width of the material. 1 1/2 or 2 yards work well too.

1. Lay the two pieces of fleece out on a table, wrong sides together, selvage sides together. The selvage edge is the side that is machine finished, not cut. Using straight pins or safety pins, neatly pin the material together about eight inches in from the edges. This is to keep your blanket in place as you work.
2. Cut off the rough selvage edge on both sides. Trim only as much as necessary, usually not more than 2 inches on each side. At this point, make sure that your cut sides are relatively straight and the same size. They don't have to be perfect!
3. Use the 4" x 4" cardboard square template to cut a square out of each corner. Place pieces of masking tape approximately 5" in from the edges of the blanket to be used as a cutting guide. See illustration below.
4. Make one inch wide cuts to the tape line on all four edges of the material. This will be the fringe.
5. Tie overhand knots close to blanket edge by using one strip from the blanket top and one strip from the blanket bottom to create a finished fringe edge. Repeat around all four sides. As you finish each side say a prayer for the person who will be receiving the blanket. The tying will look more even if you tie every other fringe all the way around the blanket, then flip the blanket over and tie the rest. This way neither side is really the front or the back! Remove the masking tape.

### Tips:

The nature of fleece makes two of the sides stretchy. Don't fear! Just be gentle when tying those sides so that your fringe isn't stretched out of shape. The knots do not have to be tight to remain tied and keep the blanket together.

We will bring our gifts to Jesus as the Wise Men did so many years ago. Please bring your finished blanket to Faith Formation when you return on Wednesday, January 11th or to Mass the weekend of January 7th and 8th. Please put them in the Helping Hands Box. Father will bless them before we send them off to the St. Joseph Shelter. If your family would like to volunteer to deliver the blankets—email Ginger to get the information. **May God bless each of your families as you bless a family in need!**

