

Dec 12. The Christingle Story

An activity for the children today:

Each year, many children enjoy making a Christingle at Christmas time. It is a tradition which began 273 years ago in a small church in Germany. One story about how it began goes like this:

The children in the village were asked to bring a small gift to put in the crib at the church on Christmas Eve. One family was very poor and couldn't afford to buy a gift, but they had an orange, which seemed like a special gift to them. The top was a bit green, so the eldest brother cut a hole and put a candle in to hide the green. They thought it needed something else to decorate it though, so one of the sisters took a red ribbon from her hair and tied it around the orange. To hold the ribbon in place they used four cocktail sticks and then decorated the sticks with small bits of fruit. They were still a little shy about their gift but when the priest at the church saw it he was delighted and used it to help tell the story of God's love...



The round **orange** represents the world.

The **red ribbon** shows us the love that God has for us - through the blood of Jesus which was shed for all the world. Sometimes a white ribbon can be used and it shows the peace that Jesus brings to the world.

The **four cocktail sticks** usually point in four directions - north, south, east and west because God calls people from the four corners of the earth. They can also remind us of the four seasons, and how God looks after our world.

The **dried fruit (or sweeties!)** tell us about all the good things God gives us.

The **candle** shows us the best gift of all - Jesus, the Light of the World.

Why not make your own this year?

(You can use a little piece of tinfoil around the candle to catch drips, but if a candle isn't such a good idea, you could try using a small glow stick instead!)