

## Celebrating the Holiday's remotely

This holiday season me and my family utilized an app called 'house party' to celebrate Christmas with each other. Typically, my whole family would all congregate at either my own house, my grandmas, or my aunt's home for Christmas day dinner – in total we'd have about around 17-22 people showing up each Christmas. However, this year only 7 of us used the app to stay in celebrate Christmas with one another. It was a very odd experience; I didn't feel like I was really spending any special time with family as not many of us were there; and it was hard to talk to everyone with such a small phone screen, it just didn't feel right if that makes any sense. We only spent about thirty minutes on the phone which isn't at all comparable to the whole day we'd traditionally spend together; it all just felt so forced and unnatural. But we weren't mentioning that, neither were any of us 'upset' that this is the way it had to be as many other people in our area were vehemently saying all over the internet. My close family, or home is made up of me, my mom, my dad and my dog. The whole day in general just felt off, we didn't have many gifts under the tree because times have been a little hard but we all could really care less, we have a nice home, warm clothes and jobs, which so many people today don't have. After the morning we tried to make dinner, and ended up setting three of those cork oven placemats on fire; which resulted in the fire alarm going off for a good twenty minutes. We rarely spoke through the whole day, with me just staying in my room for the afternoon – needless to say it didn't feel like Christmas, or even home in some regards. Yet, I feel like this socially distanced Christmas is somewhat of a 'good thing' for me and my family, it really put into perspective the value of family and just how much the social bonds and gatherings we share affect our lives in a positive manner. That's a very long way to say that family love is more than important, that we need each other; that these special days aren't special if you're not celebrating it with people you love – aside from the theological core of Christmas.