

READING ONE: THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

Mary receives the Good News from the Angel Gabriel that she is to be the mother of God.

Characters: Mary, Gabriel & the Dove

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

READING TWO: THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

Mary and Joseph must travel to Bethlehem just as Mary is due to give birth.

Characters: Mary, Joseph, Donkey

Luke 2:1-5

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

READING THREE: THE BIRTH OF THE LORD

Mary give birth to her firstborn son, Jesus, and she places him in the animals' manger.

Characters: Mary, Joseph, Donkey, sheep, oxen etc.

Luke 2:6-7

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

READING FOUR: THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE SHEPHERDS

Angels announce to the shepherds of Bethlehem that Jesus Christ is born.

Characters: Angels, Shepherds, Sheep

Luke 2:8-16

In the region of Bethlehem there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to all people on earth!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherd said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

READING FIVE: THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

From faraway countries the magi are led by a star to Bethlehem. Characters: 3 Kings, Camels, Horses, Elephants, & Entourage, Star

Matthew 2:1-9a

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When the wise men had heard the king, they set out: and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising.

READING SIX: THE SHEPHERDS GLORIFY GOD

The Shepherd begin to tell everyone the good news of Jesus Christ. Characters: Shepherds, Sheep, Mary, Joseph, Donkey, etc.

Luke 2:16-21

So the shepherds went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

READING SEVEN: THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

The Magi visit the newborn Jesus and offer him their gifts.

Characters: 3 Kings, Star, Mary, Joseph, Donkey, Oxen, etc.

Matthew 2:9-12

The Magi set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

READING EIGHT: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

John the Baptist baptizes Jesus in the River Jordan.

Characters: Angels, John the Baptist, Jesus, the Dove.

Adapted from John, Matthew & Luke

In the beginning was the one who is called the Word.

The Word was with God and was truly God.

From the very beginning the Word was with God. And with this Word, God created all things. Everything that was created received its life from him, and his life gave light to everyone.

The light keeps shining in the dark, and darkness has never put it out. God sent a man named John, who came to tell about the light and to lead all people to have faith. John wasn't that light.

He came only to tell about the light.

The true light that shines on everyone was coming into the world.

The Word became a human being and lived here with us.

From him all the kindness and all the truth of God have come down to us.

John spoke about him and shouted, "This is the one I told you would come! He is greater than I am, because he was alive before I was born."

John went along the Jordan Valley, telling the people, "The kingdom of heaven will soon be here. Turn back to God and be baptized! Then your sins will be forgiven."

Isaiah the prophet wrote about John when he said, "In the desert someone is shouting,

'Get the road ready for the Lord!

Make a straight path for him.'"

From Jerusalem and all Judea and from the Jordan River Valley crowds of people went to John. They told how sorry they were for their sins, and he baptized them in the river.

Everyone became excited and wondered, "Could John be the Messiah?"

John said, "I am just baptizing with water. But someone more powerful is going to come, and I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

Jesus left Galilee and went to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John kept objecting and said, "I ought to be baptized by you. Why have you come to me?"

Jesus answered, "For now this is how it should be, because we must do all that God wants us to do." Then John agreed.

So Jesus was baptized. And as soon as he came out of the water, the sky opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, "This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him."