

Stage crew put black curtains in place. Arrange center curtain with desert backdrop. Give Mary a broom.

Gabriel and Posse, Elizabeth, Caesar, Baby Jesus and Handler should be backstage right: Mary, Joseph, Innkeeper, Innkeeper assistant, Shepherds should be backstage left Kings, stars should be in the Narthex.

Mary should wait wings left. Gabriel and Posse should wait wings right.

Music: As the kids get into place for the Pageant, please play a song on the piano. When they are ready, Narrator 1 (who will be in the Pulpit- will give you a thumbs up).

Narrator 1: Welcome to our telling of the Christmas Story. IF there are any kids who would like to come forward and sit in the front to see, you can come down now. (Wait to see if anyone comes)

Narrator 2: We will be telling our story with scripture and song and some dance, so we ask that you please keep the aisles clear for traveling families and shooting stars. The words of the pageant are included in your bulletin if you would like to read along. We ask for your help in singing the Christmas Carols. Thank you.

FIRST ACT: THE WORD

Narrator 1: A reading from John, Chapter 1, verses 1-5.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Mary go to stage left and start sweeping. Gabriel and Posse wait in wings of Stage right.

Bells play while actors take their places. Stop when you see Mary ready.

SECOND ACT: THE ANNUNCIATIONS

Narrator 2: The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a young woman who was engaged to a man by the name of Joseph. The woman's name was Mary. The angel came to her.

Gabriel and Posse enter center stage.

Gabriel: Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. 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 : How can this be, since I am not yet married?

Gabriel : 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.

Gabriel and Posse move to stage right. Mary take center stage. Dancing angels move to wings right.

Mary: Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word. My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me.

Stage crew removes broom while Angels take their places.

Piano will play while Gabriel, Posse, and Dancing Angels arrange themselves for the dance. Mary stays center stage. Once Angels are in place, the song will start:

Hymn 265, “Most Highly Favored Lady” verses 2 & 3 sung by Choristers. All Angels dance...

Stage crew makes sure Joseph has his pillow.

At the end of the song, all angels go backstage right: Mary exits stage left: Joseph takes center stage with pillow and lies down to sleep.

Bells play while actors take their places. Stop when you see Joseph ready.

Narrator 1: When Mary was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.

Gabriel enter stage right.

Gabriel: Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Joseph: Let it be according to your word.

Stage crew removes pillow and places chair for Elizabeth center stage. Stage crew makes sure Elizabeth has her knitting.

Joseph exits stage left. Gabriel exits stage right. Elizabeth enters from wings right to center stage and sits and knits.

Bells play while actors take their places. Stop when you see Elizabeth ready.

Narrator 2: The Angel Gabriel had told Mary that her cousin, Elizabeth, had conceived a son in her old age, as proof that nothing was impossible with God. So Mary set out to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went to Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.

Mary enters from stage left. Elizabeth stands up. Mary goes to Elizabeth and hugs her.

Mary: Dear Cousin! I’ve come to visit!

Elizabeth: Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should I be honored with a visit from the mother of the Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes! Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.

Mary and Elizabeth hug again.

Narrator 1: Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, and then went back home.

Stage crew removes chair and knitting to backstage left.

Mary and Elizabeth exit stage left. Caesar enters from back stage right to center stage.

Bells play while changing actors take their places. Stop Once Caesar is center stage.

THIRD ACT: THE BIRTH

Narrator 2: At that time, Caesar Augustus was the ruler of the Roman Empire.

Music plays an announcement chord.

Caesar Augustus: I, Caesar Augustus, do decree that all the world should be counted. To that end, all must return to the city of their ancestors.

Music again plays an announcement chord. Caesar exits stage right, Mary, Joseph and donkey enter from stage left to center stage.

Joseph: I am glad that you are home, for I have heard that there is a decree from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be counted. We must go now to Bethlehem, for my family is of the house of David, and we will register for the census there.

Mary: But I am with child, and Bethlehem is so far away. How will we manage?

Joseph: We have a donkey to carry our things and if you tire, you can ride on him. We can travel slowly, and I will help you.

Narrator 1: And so they set out on their long journey.

Music begin.

While parish sings, stage crew change backdrop to Inn

Mary, Joseph and Donkey travel during song:: Innkeepers take their places in front of the Inn, Stage left.

Hymn 78, "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem" verses 1 & 2 sung by ALL

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

Mary, Joseph and Donkey return to stage right.

Narrator 2: Because of the census, all of the Inns were full when Mary and Joseph arrived.

Joseph: Excuse me, Innkeeper, we have traveled all day, and the night is coming. Do you have a room for us?

Innkeeper: My Inn is full. I'm sorry, but you will have to go somewhere else.

Mary: But we have been to all the other Inns, and no one has a room. Is there no place we can stay?

Asst. Innkeeper (to the Innkeeper): There is room in the stables, with the animals. It's not much, but it is shelter...

Innkeeper: They wouldn't want to stay in there. It's not very clean. And the smell of the animals...

Asst. Innkeeper: [shrugging his shoulders] It's something...

Innkeeper: [to Joseph] If you would like, you can stay in the stables.

Joseph: Thank you. We will stay there.

Innkeeper: Very well, I will lead you to the stables, while my cousin gets you a blanket.

Innkeepers exit stage right.

Joseph (to Mary): I am sorry I could not get us a room in the Inn.

Mary: Don't be sorry. We have shelter, and the animals will help us to stay warm. It is enough.

Innkeeper (sticking head back out): Come now, for I am busy!

Mary, Joseph and Donkey all exit stage right. Shepherds enter from stage left. Angels wait in wings stage right.

Stage crew change backdrop to starry night.

Bells play while changing scene to shepherds field - stop playing when All Shepherds are in place.

Narrator 1: That night, Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

1 Shepherdess: The stars are so bright tonight, but it is also so cold!

2 Shepherdess: Have you noticed that we have more than just sheep in our flock tonight?

ANIMALS MAKE NOISES

3 Shepherdess: **That does sound unusual.** We should probably check it out. Can all of the animals come forward and join us on the steps?

ALL CHILDREN DRESSED AS ANIMALS SHOULD COME FORWARD AT THIS TIME.

3 Shepherdess: You are right! We have all kinds of animals in our flock. [feel free to name them]

Narrator 2: Then an angel of the Lord, with a multitude of angels, stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

ALL CHILDREN DRESSED AS ANGELS SHOULD COME FORWARD AT THIS TIME.

Gabriel: Do not be afraid, for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people!

Posse 1: To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

Posse 2: This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.

1 Junior Shepherd: Hark! A star is rising in the East!

2 Junior Shepherd: Lo! He is right...a star is shooting across the sky!

3 Junior Shepherd: WOW! LOOK!

Bells play while "star" tumbles down center aisle.

Stage crew changes backdrop to stable and places manger and chair for Mary.

Mary and Joseph sits/stands in front with Baby Jesus, all angels, animals and shepherds gather round. When Star arrives, she goes up and joins the cast and at that point, Maggie will start the Hymn... Twirling Star will start at the beginning of the 2nd verse...

Hymn 109, "The First Nowell," verses 1 & 2, sung by ALL.

1. *The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.*

Refrain: *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

2. *They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.*

Refrain

Bells play while the Kings process down the aisle...stop when they reach center stage:

Star continues to twirl...

FINAL ACT: THE LIGHT

First King: When wise men from the East saw the star rising, they rejoiced, for they had heard of the prophecies of the birth of the Messiah and they set out at once to follow the star.

Second King: For it was said, "The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them." They traveled many miles to see him. But that is a story for another day.

Third King: The Christmas story is not about a baby who grows up to be God, but about the God of Israel who enters creation as the helpless child of Mary, becoming like us, so we may become like him, the Beloved Children of God.

Narrators and Stage Crew that want, join full cast on altar as you sing:

Hymn 99, "Go Tell It On The Mountain," verse 1 sung by ALL

*Chorus: *Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!*

1. While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light
repeat chorus*

Everyone come forward for a bow. Then return to pews. Fr. Sean will do a sermon, and prayers. When we get to the Peace, all stage crew come up and strike backdrops so that the altar is cleared for the Eucharistic Prayer.