

Reader's Theater- The Christmas Story

Master List of Readers

Luke 1:26-38

Mary and Gabriel

Narrator

Mary

Gabriel

Matthew 1:18-28

Joseph's Dream

Narrator

Angel

Joseph

Luke 2:1-7

Birth of Jesus

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Luke 2:8-10

Shepherds and Angels

Narrator

Angel

Shepherd

Choir/All

Matthew 2

The Magi, The Genocide

Narrator

Herod

Angel

Congregation/Men/Women

Reader's Theater: Jesus' Birth Foretold (The Annunciation)

Based on Luke 1:26-38 NRSV

Parts: Narrator, Mary, Gabriel

NARRATOR

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,

GABRIEL

Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.

NARRATOR

But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

GABRIEL

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 a virgin?

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. 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.

MARY

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

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Reader's Theater: Joseph's Dream

Based on Matthew 1:18-25 NRSV

Parts: Narrator, Angel, Prophet

NARRATOR

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she 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 and said,

ANGEL

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. All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

PROPHET

Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him "Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."

NARRATOR

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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Reader's Theater: The Birth of Jesus

Based on Luke 2:1-7 NRSV

Parts: Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Narrator 3

NARRATOR

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.

NARRATOR 2

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.

NARRATOR 3

While they were there, 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.

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Reader's Theater: The Shepherds and the Angels

Based on Luke 2:8-20 NRSV

Parts: Narrator, Angel, Choir/All, Shepherd

NARRATOR

In that region 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,

ANGEL

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.

NARRATOR

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

CHOIR OR ALL

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

NARRATOR

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

SHEPHERD

Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.

NARRATOR

So they 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.

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Reader's Theater: The Magi, the Genocide

Based on Matthew 2 NIV

Parts: Narrator, Congregation, Herod, Angel

NARRATOR

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked,

ALL

Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?
We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

NARRATOR

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

ALL MEN

In Bethlehem in Judea, for this is what the prophet has written:
"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."

NARRATOR

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said,

HEROD

Go and make a careful search for the child.
As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.

NARRATOR

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

ANGEL

Get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt.
Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.

NARRATOR

So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

ALL WOMEN

A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.

NARRATOR

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,

ANGEL

Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead.

NARRATOR

So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

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