

Christmas narrations

Mary and Joseph

The sketches are set as conversations between Mary and Joseph as they have just waved goodbye to Jesus as he has set off for the Jordan at the age of 30. They could be used as a structure for a crib service or other all age Christmas service with interactive readings and carols or they could introduce a series of Christmas assemblies or be part of a school nativity production. Be creative and use them in any way you wish.

Sketch 1

Mary and Joseph enter together

Mary: Do you think he will be alright Joseph?

Joe: Of course he will Mary. He is 30 now, he's not a child anymore.

Mary: But he hasn't really been away from home before, not on his own anyway.

Joe: He'll be fine Mary, stop worrying

Mary: Yes, I'm sure you're right Joseph, but I am his Mum, I can't help worrying – it's what Mum's do. (She looks into the distance and waves) Bye Jesus! Bye! Take care. Come back and see us soon.

Joe: Say hello to John for us when you see him!

Mary: Bye Jesus! By Ah, he's gone. Can you believe it Joseph? 30 years. Where has the time gone?

Joe: Well it hasn't always been easy Mary but we've done a good job. He's a fine young man and he loves God more than any of us.

Mary: Do you remember what it was like at the beginning Joseph?

Joe: Well that's something I'm hardly likely to forget is it Mary. I mean, it wasn't the easiest start to our married life.

Mary: But it was all part of God's plan Joseph, you know that. It wasn't easy but God was with us at every step.

Joe: Well that's true Mary. God had told us what his plans were a long time before, but who would have guessed that we would be part of them?

Mary: Shall we hear God's promises again Joseph? They are such special words.

Joe: Ok Mary, I think that there is someone here who might be able to tell us what God said he would do.

Reading: The Prophets foretelling the birth of Jesus.

Sketch 2

Mary: But who would have thought that God's plan would begin in Nazareth?

Joe: Little old Nazareth where nothing ever happens.

Mary: Well nothing ever happened, until that day.

Joe: That day that turned our lives up-side-down!

Mary: I mean, I was only a child myself, just a girl. All I wanted to do was to marry you and live happily ever-after in our little home above your workshop. That's all I wanted to do. I certainly had no thoughts about being part of God's plan.

Joe: And neither did I!
Mary: But then everything changed! Everything changed and all because an angel came along and asked me to make a decision.
Joe: It can't have been easy?
Mary: Well it wasn't easy, but it wasn't hard either. It was like the whole world was waiting for me to say yes, and when I said yes it was like the whole world danced for a second, a second of pure joy! Shall we hear how it happened Joseph?
Joe: Why not. I'm sure someone is ready to tell us the story again.

Reading: The Annunciation.

Sketch 3

Mary: Do you remember the day I told you Joseph?
Joe: I might be getting a bit forgetful in my old age Mary, but that is one day I will never forget!
Mary: I didn't know how to tell you. I was excited and scared at the same time.
Joe: And I didn't know what to think. All your talk about Angels and a message from God was so hard to believe. At first it all seemed like nonsense.
Mary: But you did believe me didn't you Joseph. You believed me in the end.
Joe: Well I'll be honest with you Mary, at first I thought you were trying to spin me a clever story. At first I thought you were just making it all up! It took an angel to convince me though. An angel who told me that everything you had said was true. Your baby was who you said he was, God's son, the Messiah!
Mary: Thank you Joseph. Thank you for believing me.
Joe: Don't thank me Mary, thank God. It was God who convinced me.
Mary: O I do thank God Joseph. You remember I went to visit my cousin Elizabeth. She was expecting her baby and when I saw her God gave me a great hymn of praise to sing. I still remember it, every word. Shall I sing it for you now?
Joe: Well I think there is someone else here who knows it as well Mary. Shall we let them tell us what you said?

Reading: Mary visits Elizabeth and Magnificat

Sketch 4

Mary: Well it was all going really well when I got back from seeing Elizabeth wasn't it. We were planning our wedding and getting the house ready. You were busy at work and my Mum was telling me all she knew about babies.
Joe: But then the order came.
Mary: Those Romans just enjoy bossing us about really don't they.
Joe: Well they did then. The soldiers knew the baby was about to come but they wouldn't let us wait and they wouldn't let you stay home. No, they said we both had to go, and we had to start off straight away, even though Bethlehem was so far.
Mary: I wasn't frightened though Joseph. I knew God would look after us even if it was a bit hard to see how.

Joe: Well Mary, I don't mind telling you that I was terrified. I really thought the baby was going to be born in the street, in the dirt and cold. Bethlehem was so busy and I couldn't find a room for you anywhere.

Mary: But he wasn't was he Joseph. Shall we hear about what happened?

Joe: Well it was amazing and I'm sure someone here can tell everyone all about it for us.

Reading: The journey and birth during which children as Mary and Joseph come forward andsit beside a manger.

Sketch 5

Joe: Psst, Mary, (Pointing at Mary and Joseph in Nativity scene) who are they?

Mary: That's us Joseph.

Joe: Us? What do you mean?

Mary: That's us, 30 years ago. When it all happened.

Joe: Did I really look like that?

Mary: Well that's why I fell in love with you Joseph, because you were so handsome! But enough of that, let's get back to the story. Do you remember? Just in time, as the baby was about to come we found the stable.

Joe: It was a close call though. If we hadn't found that stable then he would have been born in the street!

Mary: But he wasn't was he. He was born in the stable. My beautiful little baby. The baby Jesus. And because we didn't have a cot or a crib you had a brilliant idea!

Joe: It was a good idea wasn't it, even though I say so myself! And with fresh straw and a blanket it was as comfortable as any cot.

Mary: Who would have imagined? God's son, laid in a manger, asleep on the straw with the animals all looking on.

Joe: Well I'm sure God did know what he was doing Mary, but it was really hard to see why it had to happen in this way. I mean, couldn't God have kept just one room free in Bethlehem for us to use?

Mary: Well maybe it was so that the visitors could come and tell us their amazing news!

Joe: Oh yes, the visitors. I could hardly forget them could I! I mean, it was my job to look after you, to keep you safe, and what happens? A bunch of smelly shepherds turn up!

Mary: they were a bit smelly weren't they.

Joe: A bit! That's an understatement!

Mary: But what they said was wonderful. Shall we hear about it?

Joe: Well let's see if anyone can tell us about it shall we?

Reading: The visit of the Shepherds

Sketch 6

Joe: I thought we'd never get rid of that smell.

Mary: Well I didn't really notice Joseph. It was a bit like the angels they had told us about had come to the stable to visit us as well. There seemed to be a special light all around us, and a special smell! Maybe there was even music, I'm not sure. I was really tired but I was happy. It was like someone was holding us in the palm of their hand!

Joe: You know, now you say that Mary, that is just what it was like. Like something surrounded us and was looking after us and making sure that nothing and no one would ever harm the baby.

Mary: We didn't mean to stay that long in Bethlehem did we Joseph?

Joe: No, not really. It was those Romans again. It took so long to register. Every time I went to try, the office was closed or the queue was too long or they had run out of forms or something. I could never have imagined that it would take 2 years to register!

Mary: but it's just as well it took so long isn't it Joseph. I mean, if we had gone back to Nazareth the travellers would never have found us would they.

Joe: Ah yes, the travellers, with their strange gifts.

Mary: Well they weren't all so strange.

Joe: I suppose not. Gold and Frankincense I can understand, but Myrrh? Why give a new baby Myrrh?

Mary: Well it made me very sad. Just the smell of Myrrh makes me sad! Shall we hear about what happened?

Joe: Good idea Mary. I'm sure someone here can tell us about our mysterious travellers.

Reading: The visit of the Magi.

Sketch 7

Mary: Herod was really angry when they didn't go back to see him wasn't he.

Joe: Very angry Mary.

Mary: I don't know why he was so frightened by a little baby. I mean, Jesus couldn't have hurt him could he.

Joe: Jesus couldn't hurt anyone Mary, not even now he is grown up.

Mary: But we had to run away didn't we.

Joe: We did Mary, all the way to Egypt and it was 6 years before we could go back to Nazareth.

Mary: It was good to get home though wasn't it, and Jesus was such a cute little toddler wasn't he.

Joe: A cute toddler and a handsome man.

Mary: and now he's gone.

Joe: He'll be alright Mary, God will look after him just like he did back at the beginning.

Mary: I really hope so Joseph, I really hope so.

Joe: Now don't be sad Mary, we've got a lot to do.

Mary: A lot to do? Why?

Joe: Well tomorrow is Jesus' birthday don't forget.

Mary: But he's not here Joseph.

Joe: Well that doesn't mean we are not going to celebrate, just like we always have and always will. It's Jesus birthday and we will celebrate whether he is here or not. So come on, let's go and get ready.

Mary: You're right Joseph! Let's make this a really special birthday!

(they exit)

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