

Fourth Sunday of Advent

The angel's visit

INTRODUCTION

Before Mary and Joseph were married, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that through the power of the Holy Spirit, she was going to have a child. This child would be the Son of God.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light our candles today, we remember that Jesus is the light of the world. Together sing the Candle Song.

SORRY

A reading (*cf Matthew 17:3-5*.)

If someone does anything to harm or hurt you, you can tell them so, but if they say sorry, you must forgive them. Even if they hurt you over and over again, if they say sorry and truly mean it, then you must forgive them over and over again. Just as God our Father forgives us, so we must forgive others, not once, but many times.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing the Advent Song.

GOSPEL (*cf Matthew 1.18-25*)

Before Joseph and Mary were married, Mary told Joseph that she was expecting a baby. Joseph was a kind and loving man and felt confused and unsure of what to do, for he did not want to upset Mary. One night, an angel came to visit Joseph in a dream. 'Joseph, do not worry. Take Mary home with you and marry her. The child within her is of the Holy Spirit. She will have a son, and you will call him Jesus. He has been sent to save the world.' So Joseph did what the angel had told him, and he and Mary were married.

DISCUSSION

No one knows exactly what an angel looks like, but how do we usually imagine them?

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and told her that she would have a child, do you think that she felt afraid? – She trusted in God completely, and relied on him to explain this happening to Joseph.

What messenger did God send to Joseph in a dream?

Like Mary, Joseph trusted in God and did what was asked of him.

ACTIVITY

'Light' the fourth candle on the Advent wreath decoration.

Copy and colour the scene of the angel appearing to Joseph in a dream

OR

Get the children to draw pictures of what they imagine angels might look like.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

God sends an angel to watch over each of us – our guardian angel. Listen carefully to the words of this prayer:

Lord keep your angel by my side,
To care for me and be my guide,
To be my friend throughout the years,
And keep me safe from harm and fears,
To stay with me each night and day,
So from your love I never stray.

