

Second Sunday in Advent/Family Sunday Liturgy

## The Act of Gathering

### Processional

The family who is leading the worship will join the processional bringing some symbols like the bible, cross, flowers and the two advent candles one is lit and one is not.

### +Opening Sentences

**Liturgist:** The unfolding of God's word gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

**All:** As we wait for the living light, let us hear God's word and live by Christ's teachings.

Sound of Bell

### Song "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times gave holy law, in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come O Rod of Jesse's stem, from ev'ry foe deliver them

That trust your mighty pow'r to save; Bring them in vict'ry through the grave.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to you, O Israel!

Sound of Bell

### Lighting the Second Candle of Advent: The Candle of Peace

**Father:** As we light this Advent Candle we acknowledge that peace does not reign in our world. The natural world around us is being destroyed.

**Mother:** Wars rage between countries. Injustice exists in every nation. Violent conflicts erupt between friends. Children are abused right in our neighborhoods.

**Child 1:** We ask, "Where is our hope?" "Who will show us the ways of peace and reconciliation?" "Where do we find the strength, the will, the courage to work for peace and justice?"

**Child2:** As always the child Jesus beckons us to prepare for his birth and in the birth of Jesus we find hope.

**All Members:** In the life and teachings of Jesus we find the way to peace and justice. And with the help of the Holy Spirit we find the courage and the power to work for peace.

### Prayer for Peace (Unison)

O God of all good gifts, this candle represents our desire to know you fully; to understand completely your love for us so that peace may truly dwell on all your holy mountain. Help us, during this season of preparation, to remember the true meaning of readying ourselves to participate in your peaceful and loving ways. Give us the courage to spread the message that your peace and love is for all people. Grant healing in our personal lives that we may know the joy of life's true abundance. Amen.

Sound of Bell

### +Opening Hymn "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er The Sun" by Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Jesus shall reign where e'er the sun,  
doth his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom stretches from shore to shore,  
till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To him shall endless prayer be made, and praises throng to crown his head;  
 His Name like sweet perfume shall rise, with every morning sacrifice.  
 People and realms of every tongue, dwell on his love with sweetest song;  
 And infant voices shall proclaim, their early blessings on his Name.  
 Blessings abound where e'er he reigns: The prisoner-leaps to lose-his chains,  
 The weary find eternal rest, and all the sons of want are blest.  
 Let every creature rise and bring, peculiar honors to our King;  
 Angels descend with songs again, and earth repeat the loud. Amen.

**Call to Confession (Leader)**

We can no longer play dumb. We not only know the lives we are called to lead, we are well aware of how we fail - through our words as well as our silence, by our deeds and our unwillingness to act. Let us confess to the God who comes to us,

**Prayer of Confession (Unison)**

You call us home to live with you, Comfort of the lost, but we are too busy right now to listen. We flock to the stores run by temptation and seduction, seeking the best prices. We rush to judge everyone around us, but ask you to be more patient with our repeated errors. We feast at the table piled high with broken promises and drink from the cup of fading dreams.

Yet you continue to cry out to us, Broken Heart, speaking to us of your love. Forgiveness is the gift for every moment, not just one day; hope is our constant companion as we journey with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who is your Messenger of mercy.

Sound of Bell

**Song of Confession**

**The Steadfast Mercy of God**  
 (Ang Kalooy sa Ginoo)

Words: Feliciano R. Ursos;  
 Eng. Trans. Sally B. Villagante

Music: Elena G. Maquiso, 1971

The—stead-fast mer-cy of God—has the wide-ness of the— sea, God's— fair - ness and sense of  
 The— bless-ed love of— God,— o - ver - flo - wing with-out— cease Spring - ing from the depths of com -  
 just - ice are more than li - ber - ty. The grief and pain deep in our hearts God, in  
 pass - ion, God's heart em - brac - ing our pain. If we love God to the full - est and we  
 mer - cy knows and— feels, Hu - man frail - ties and our— weak - ness in God's me - cy cast a - side.  
 trust in the Liv - ing Word, We would have a life ffilled with glad - ness. Our— God be glo - ri - fied!

**Assurance of Pardon** (Minister)

May the God of peace cleanse you through and through. The promise is that our whole being—spirit, soul and body will be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:23) Rejoice, then, and give thanks as we receive forgiveness and healing in Christ's name. Amen.

**Passing of Peace**

"As forgiven people of God, let us go around and share God's peace to one another (while singing "I've Got Peace like a River".)

**Church/Community Concerns**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Response**

"Kum Ba Yah My Lord"  
Kum ba yah my Lord, kum ba yah (2x)  
O Lord Kumbayah  
Someone's praying Lord, Kum ba yah(2x)  
O Lord Kum ba yah

**Poem Reading**

"Ideal World"  
(HFJ #458 but it is ok to read another poem on peace if you have one)

**Scripture Readings:**

**Jeremiah 33:14-16, Romans 15:12-13**

**Anthem**

**Proclamation of the Word**

**Call to Offering (Leader)**

Through Christ, let us continually praise God and share what we have, for such gifts are pleasing to God.

**Offering**

**Offertory Song:**

**"Silent Night, Holy Night"**

Men's Choir or Family Choir

**Doxology**

**+Thanksgiving Prayer** (Unison)

Gracious and Giving God, we once again prepare for the birth of your chosen Son. Through the voices of prophets and preachers, you have been heard in the driest deserts and the steepest valleys. Unfurl our hearts and open our minds so that we may hear your salvation story anew. Giving this money is a worshipful gesture of our unending alleluias to you. We dedicate this offering to your Kingdom work. Amen

**+Song of Dedication** "Make Me a Channel of Peace"

Make me a channel of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.  
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord. And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace. Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, only light. And where there's sadness, ever joy.

**Refrain**

Oh, Master grant that I may never seek, so much to be consoled as to console  
To be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned  
In giving to all men that we receive and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Refrain

Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.  
In giving to all men that we receive and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Refrain

**+Closing Prayer** (Minister)

God we thank You for meeting us here tonight, and for delivering Your Word through the speaker. May each soul in this place have been touched through the songs and the preaching, and may each take to heart the Word that came forth. We pray that those seeking an answer received it, and that those who needed a special touch were granted that touch. Bless each of us and keep us safe until we are able to gather together again. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

**+Benediction** (Minister)

Go now: wait and work for the coming of the day of God. In the wild places prepare a straight path for the Lord. Lead lives of holiness and godliness, strive to be found at peace, and speak freely of the Lord's comfort and promise.

And may God our shepherd gather you in loving arms; May Christ Jesus reconcile justice and peace within you; And may the Holy Spirit baptise you into the life of God.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

**Postlude** (Guitar)

**Recessional**

**Sources**

1. Words for Worship edited by Arlene M. Mark
2. Worship Resources 9<sup>th</sup> CCA Assembly
3. Resources and Reflections for Worship
4. Worship Together
5. Worship Elements and Symbols
6. Hymnal of Faith Journey
7. [www.ucc.worshipresources](http://www.ucc.worshipresources)

Second Sunday in Advent/Family Sunday

Lectionary Title 2: **The Call of Mary**

*Old Testament: Isaiah. 7:14* (NRSV, 1989)

<sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

*New Testament: Luke 1:26-35* (NRSV, 1989)

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>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. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup>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.'

*General Concept: The woman chosen to be Jesus' mother was of lowly status in society.*

*Key Concepts in the Different Age Levels in Sunday School*

N/K/YE: **Mary is Jesus' mother.**

ME/OE: **Mary is called to be mother of Jesus.**

Y: **Mary accepts the call to be mother of Jesus.**

A: **Mary nurtures the family in faith.**

*Exegesis of the Biblical References*

This prophetic pronouncement of Isaiah, serving as a sign of assurance from God, took place during the reign of King Ahaz when Judah was threatened by an invasion of the alliance of Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel. King Ahaz back then was worried that the rising superpower at the time, Assyria, was the greater source of danger to their long term security as a nation. In fear, the king was being pressured by the Syro-Israelite alliance to join them in this alliance of small nations to fight the imperial giant Assyria. Otherwise, the alliance was also threatening to attack Jerusalem and replace him with a more cooperative puppet king. Ahaz was facing both major threats and the temptation to seek help from other nations to ensure his and Judah's security. This was not a good move according to God as reminded by the prophet Isaiah. It is only in God that Ahaz should trust and not in political-military and other alliances. The prophet then spoke about a sign that God will manifest to the king. That is, that the young woman (*ha almah*) shall bear a son who shall be called *Immanuel* (God with us). The sign is referring to Ahaz's wife and by bearing a son with this name, it means that the baby will be the continuing indicator of God's presence, keeping company with His people in spite of the dangers and threats they are facing as a people. God is with them (us) even in moments of serious challenges and most terrifying times. There is no need to rely on political alliances even with foreign powers. A people need only to rely on God's abiding presence and power to save His people. This is then again reiterated in Matthew's gospel and the reference to the prophetic sign is Mary, the mother of Jesus who became the embodiment of hope that God will again

be with His suffering and dominated people. They only need to trust the coming living sign and embodiment of this hope as the prophet then had assured King Ahaz in a very critical period in Israel's history.

The narrative of Luke tells how Mary was chosen to be the bearer of the Son of the Most High and the one who will inherit the throne of his ancestor David. Mary was a virgin or simply a young woman. The apparition of Gabriel, the messenger of the Lord, was really perplexing to her because she considered herself as a nobody. In the Jewish tradition, women are not considered as equal to men but here in the narrative is the story of a chosen woman, Mary. Another conflict arising in this narrative was the miraculous conception itself as she was just a young single woman and have just been engaged to Joseph unlike her cousin Elizabeth who can really have the possibility of bearing a child due to her being married to Zechariah. It was not yet permitted for engaged couples as in the case of Mary and Joseph to live together. But it is through the Divine Will of God, the Holy Spirit that made all this possible. The notion of God being powerful and breaking the limits of possibility is showcased in the narrative. God therefore is offering another perspective to see God's saving act through instruments which may be seen by many as impossible such as Mary; who is both woman and not yet married. The announcement of Gabriel will really make the situation of Mary worse especially in the eyes of her community because it is certainly unacceptable to be pregnant without being officially married. Yet, she boldly accepted God's will by submitting herself to God as a humble servant. This shows the spirituality of her courageous faith even if it will cost Mary her honor and respectability in the community. She had also shown her rootedness in the faith that God is in control in whatever may happen. It will be God who will decide the course of her life in accordance with God's Will and it will be by God's power that everything will have its moment of fulfillment. It is a vision of tomorrow which Mary truly believed and fully trusted.

#### *Companion Guide for the Teachers and Other Users*

To know Jesus, one must know his mother, Mary. What kind of a person was Mary? Not born to a family of means or high position, Mary didn't bring anything into her marriage with Joseph. Certainly, it didn't improve her social status with her marriage to an ordinary man. Apparently, Joseph was a migrant worker whose family moved from his ancestral town of Bethlehem to settle down in Nazareth. Owing to her husband's early death, Mary was left alone to tend her growing family. Perhaps, this is one reason why Jesus, the eldest among the brood, didn't marry upon reaching marriageable age in order to support his mother and younger siblings. But Mary herself must be a formidable woman. She was certainly Jesus' first teacher of the Jewish Scriptures. As a devout mother, she impressed on her children's young minds Israel's heroic history and its heroes like Moses, the tribal judges and the prophets. Jesus saw how Mary struggled as a mother and provider of the family. At the same time, he watched her keep her dignity, poise and honor in the face of adversities and maybe scorn from society. Hardship and suffering was her daily fare, which prepared her to bear the horrific end of her beloved son.

From a Christian perspective, the choice of Jesus' parents should be considered God's most important decision after his call of Israel as "a light to the nations." It is unfortunate that the church has not saved any report on Joseph, Jesus' father. But this is more than made up by very significant narratives about his mother, Mary. In all of these reports, she appears as a woman of a humble social origin like most women in her time. *But her self-understanding carries a perspective that reflects the hopes and aspirations of her generation and nation: the coming of the Day of the Lord when the poor and lowly shall be filled and lifted up even as the proud and mighty shall be judged by God and brought down.*

## Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session and with the consistent example shown by parents and other significant adults, the children will be able to:

1. identify Mary as Jesus' mother;
2. show appreciation of what could Mary have done as Jesus' mother; and
3. repeat actions of one's mother as she shows love and care for one's children.

### II. Concept: Mary is called to be mother of Jesus.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), offering plate, song chart, cookies and candies, activity sheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Greet each child warmly and make them feel the atmosphere of home and love.
2. Please refer to the Advent liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Teach the song "With Jesus in the Family"
2. Prepare the class to play the game "That's My Mom". Display the puppet sticks, mothers and kids unarranged. Ask the learners to help the moms look for their babies.
3. Ask: What did you do? (We helped the moms look for their babies.) Do you have your mothers, too? (Yes.) Can you describe your mom? (Answers may vary. She's pretty. She smells good.)

#### C. Learning Time

1. Ask: "Do you know that Jesus has a mother too?" (Yes. Jesus had a mom too like anyone of us.) Let us find out in the story who is this mother of Jesus.
2. Tell the following story based on Luke 1:26-35. Tell the class to use the activity sheet.

#### Mary, Mother of Jesus

Mary is a kind and simple woman. She loves God very much. She is about to marry, Joseph. One fair day, an angel of God appears to Mary. He tells Mary that she will have a baby. Mary is surprised. She is also afraid.

But the Angel of the Lord tells her, "Do not be afraid. God loves you so much. God is pleased with you. Your baby will become a savior of all. You will name Him Jesus. He will become the greatest of all."

Mary asks the angel, "How can I be pregnant? I am not yet married to Joseph.

The angel answers, "Do not worry, Mary. The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The power of God will cover you and the Son of God will be born through you."

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. Ask these questions.
  - a. Who is the mother of Jesus? (Mary)
  - b. Why Mary is chosen to be the mother of Jesus? (The Lord was pleased with her)
  - c. How did Mary show his love to Jesus? (By taking care of Him)
2. Tell the learners to think about themselves before answering the questions.
  - a. What is the name of your mother? (Answers may vary.)

- b. How does your mother love and care for you?
  - c. Like Mary and our mothers, how can we also show love for others? ( We can show love by caring for others. We can show love by helping others. We can show love by welcoming other kids. We can show love by sharing.)
3. Tell the class to do a pantomime of what their mothers do to them to show their love for them.

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Ask: "Who is the mother of Jesus? Who told her that she will be Jesus' mother? How did she show her love for Jesus?"

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the biblical verse.  
**For N/K:** "Behold a young woman shall conceive and bear a son." (Isaiah 7:14)  
**For YE:** "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.'" (Luke 1:35)
2. Tell the class to do these activities.  
**For N/K:** I Care for You! Provide a small brown bag for each kid and a poster with "I Care For You". Tell them to paste the note on the front part of the bag. Let them get some goodies on the teacher's table and put them inside the bag. Tell the kids to give it to other kids to show their love for them.  
**For YE:** I Can Show Love! Tell the class to color the pictures that show love for others.

*G. Closing Worship*

1. Tell the learners to recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Closing songs: "Many, Many Years Ago" and "With Jesus in the Family"
4. Closing prayer: "Dear God, thank you for this Sunday. Guide us today as we learn about Jesus' mother. Open our heart that we may learn from Mary today. Thank you for the love of all our mothers. Help us to show our love and care for other children in this world. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen."



## Middle and Older Elementary Levels

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the children are expected to:

1. identify Mary as Jesus' mother;
2. explain that Mary was called to be mother of Jesus;
3. accept the fact that people are called by God for a purpose; and
4. express one's acceptance to God's call to us through a poster.

### II. Concept: Mary is called to be mother of Jesus.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), activity sheet, crayons, song chart, crayons, pencils, coupon bond or cartolina

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet each child warmly and make them feel the atmosphere of home and love.
2. Please refer to the Advent liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. Instruct the learners to get ready to play the game "I Say...You Do..." Tell them to form a big circle. Put a crown to act like a king. Give them the things that learners will do as written on a strip of paper. The learners will do what is told. Ask them to come forward.
  - a. Those whose name has letter "a", jump five times forward and five times backward.
  - b. Those who are in fifth grade say this twice: "She sells seashells in the seashore."
  - c. Those who are wearing black shoes, dance with your own music.
  - d. Those who wear pants, make seven baby steps to the door.
  - e. Those who wear red, recite last Sunday Memory verse together.
  - f. Those whose surname has letter "e", play rock scissors and paper.
  - g. Those who attended last Sunday, sing "I Have Two Hands" with action.
  - h. The person who has the longest hair, lead the closing prayer later.
  - i. Those who has coins/ bills in their pocket or wallet, clap ten times.
  - j. Those December celebrators, please stay to arrange our room later.
2. After the game, ask: When you were called to do the task, how did you respond? How do you observe those who did the task?
3. Tell the class to recall a character in the bible who was called by God to do a task.

#### C. Learning Time

1. Say: "Like in our game, God calls people to do a certain task. One of those is Mary. Mary is called by God to be mother of Jesus. Let's find out in the story how Mary accepted her call to the mother of Jesus."
2. Group the class into two. Assign each group to play the Angel Gabriel and Mary. When they see the character in the story, ask them to stand together and say their character aloud. Assign somebody to be the narrator.

3. Present the story. Tell the class to use the activity sheet.

The Call of Mary  
(Based from Luke 1: 26-35)

It was in the sixth month, God send an (angel) to a town called Nazareth in Galilee. He appeared to (Mary) who was about to marry Joseph, from the house of David. The (angel) of God told her not to be afraid for He has good news.

"(Mary), you will conceive in you womb and bear a son. You will call him Jesus. "He will be great and be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestors David and reign forever,"

But, (Mary) asked, "How can this be? I am a virgin."

The (angel) of God replied: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most Holy High will overshadow; He will be called the son of God."

"I am God's servant. Let God's will be done upon me," (Mary) said.

Then the (angel) of God departed.

*D. Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time*

1. Discuss the text and the story by answering the following questions:
  - a. What was Angel Gabriel's' good news to Mary? (Mary will give birth to God's son.)
  - b. How did Mary respond to God's call? (Mary humbly accepted the call of God.)
  - c. Why do you think God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother? (Mary loves God. She is devoted and faithful to God. She will definitely take care of God's Son very well.)
2. Say: "Like Mary, God calls us to do things for Him. Why? (Everyone is called to do things to honor God.) Let the class give ways of of honoring God in the following places. Expect different answers.
  - a. At home (Obey our parents.)
  - b. In school (Study faithfully. Be a good friend.)
  - c. In the church (Worship God and love our fellow believers.)
  - d. In the community

*E. Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Say: "Mary is called by God to be mother of Jesus. Mary accepted the call with all her heart." Ask: How did Mary take care of Jesus? How do our parents take care of us as they are called by God to be our parents?

*F. Applying the Biblical Truth*

1. Teach the biblical verse.
 

**For ME:** "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.'" (Luke 1:35)

- For OE:** “The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour 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.’ (Luke 1:30-33)
2. Tell the class to do these activities.
- For ME:** *Poster making.* Provide recyclable materials to the class and tell the learners to express their acceptance to God's call for you through a poster. (This activity needs cutting so the back page is intentionally left blank.)
- For OE:** *Writing one's thoughts.* The Bible Says...I Say... Tell the class to color the pictures that show love for others.

### G. *Closing Worship*

1. Tell the class to recite the memory verse.
2. Offering
3. Reflective action: “I will do what is right when called upon to do something.”
4. Closing songs:  
“What Child is This?” Hymnal of a Faith Journey #138  
“Silent Night! Holy Night!” (by Franz Gruber 1818, Hymnal of a Faith Journey # 129)
5. Closing prayer: “Dear God, thank you for calling each of one us to work with you. Like Mary, help us to accept Your call for us. You have called us to show love, kindness and care for one another. Help us to respond to your call with all our heart. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen”

## Youth Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. analyze in the scriptural text the verse where the birth of Mary's son is foretold;
2. explain how Mary accepted her call to be the mother of Jesus;
3. discuss the significance of Mary's acceptance of her call; and
4. express how one receives a call from God for a purpose.

### II. Concept: Mary accepts the call to be the mother of Jesus.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheets, picture of Mary and Angel Gabriel, journal/notebook

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Greet each learner as they enter the room.
2. Please refer to the Advent liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

1. **Game.** Divide the class into three groups to play charades. Each group will be provided with sheets of paper and will be given two minutes to name the Bible characters that did a task for God.

##### Group 1

- a. God called him to build an ark (Noah).
- b. God called him to lead Israel to the Promise Land (Moses).
- c. God called him to rule God's people. He killed a giant (David).
- d. After he stayed in the big fish belly, God called him to go Nineveh to warn the people of God's judgment on their wickedness (Jonah).

##### Group 2

- e. He lost his vision and was asked by God to preach the gospel to kings, Jews and Gentiles (Paul).
- f. He wakes up from his sleep when God calls him to bring news to Prophet Eli (Samuel).
- g. An angel cleansed his lips using the live coal from the altar to become God's prophet (Isaiah).
- h. She helped hide the Israelite spies from the king's guards (Rahab).

##### Group 3

- i. He asked God for a sign to prove God had chosen him to be the Israelites' army leader (Gideon).
  - j. God called him, even though he is young, and touched his lips to be God's messenger (Jeremiah).
  - k. Though she was old, God used her to bear a child to fulfill his promise to Abraham to be the father of many nations (Sarah).
  - l. She followed God by living with her mother-in-law and became a great grandmother of Jesus (Ruth).
2. Discuss the game. Ask the following questions:
    - a. How do you think these characters managed doing what God asked them to do? (Most of them prayed to God for guidance in order to do what God asked them to do.)

- b. What do you think would have happened if these people refused to obey God's call in their life? (Many of us would have missed out on God's blessings. God would have raised up and called a new person. The persons who refused would have missed out the rewards in heeding His call)
3. Say: Let's get to know another character who was called by God to do a special task and find out how did she accepted responded to it.

### C. *Learning Time*

1. Tell the class to read the Scriptural texts. Emphasie the the OT text has been fulfilled in the NT text
2. Let the students supply the dialogs in the comic strips using the accounts in Luke 1:26-35. Tell them to use the activity sheet for this purpose.

### D. *Deepening Activity/ Sharing Time*

In small groups of 5s, have each group answer any one of these questions. Allot the remaining 5mins for the groups to share the highlights of their discussion to the rest of the big group.

1. What was angel Gabriel's good news to Mary? (Gabriel foretold that Mary was about o give birth to God's son.)
2. Why was Mary perplexed/troubled upon hearing Gabriel's news? (Mary was perplexed because she considered herself a nobody and not worthy of giving birth to God's son. She was still a virgin and not yet married.)
3. What was Mary's response to her call from God? (Mary humbly accepted His call.)
4. What does this story tell you about the natural human response when God calls us to do something? (Answers may vary.)
5. What does this story tell you about the way you answer God's calls? (Answers may vary.)

### E. *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

Say: "God wanted his messiah to grow up under the care of a mother like Mary."  
Ask: "What is the significance of Mary's acceptance of her call? What do you like about Mary's character and the way she accepted God's call? Why do you think it is important that Mary accepted God's call to be the mother of the Messiah?"

### F. *Applying the Biblical Truth*

Say: Based on your answer to question # 5, write your action on how you receive a call from God for a purpose. Include in your write-up a story about a time that you felt God was calling you to do something difficult but you obeyed anyway. Share what difficulties you have encountered and what or who helped you obey God's call ? Finish your note by writing a short prayer of thanksgiving for God's enablement in your life to heed His call. Provide the activity sheet for this exercise.

### G. *Closing Worship*

1. Memory verse: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7: 14).
2. Offering
3. Closing song: "Silent Night! Holy Night!"
4. Closing prayer: "Our God, we praise you for letting us know Mary as she submitted herself to Your Will. May we be like her in responding to Your call of service using the gifts we received from You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

## Adult Level

### I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. describe the social origin of Mary;
2. explain the significance of Mary's social status as she was called by God to be mother of Jesus;
3. display Mary's conviction to nurture her family in the faith; and
4. follow the example of Mary, as parents, in nurturing the family in good times and in the midst of adversities.

### II. Concept: Mary nurtures the family in faith.

**Materials:** *The Holy Bible* (NRSV, 1989), hymnal, activity sheets

### III. Learning Experiences

#### A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: Encourage sharing of experiences among the adults.
2. Please refer to the Advent liturgy.

#### B. Getting Ready

Tell the class to play the game "Name that Parent!" Write the description of each of the different characters on a piece of paper and put them in a bowl. Ask each student to pick one and name the character. Distribute the activity sheet.

1. She prayed to God for a long time to bear a child, until a son was given to her. She promised to God that she will dedicate him to live in the temple and serve Him (Hannah).
2. He listened to the angel of the Lord and brought his family out of Israel to protect them (Joseph).
3. With the help of his grandmother and mother, they taught Timothy to have faith in God and help Paul in the ministry and mission (Lois and Eunice).
4. He gathered the Israelites to renew their covenant in Shechem. Then he pledged himself and his household to serve the one and only God. (Joshua).
5. When God sent the angel of death to kill all the firstborn children of Egypt, he reminded his people about Israel's deliverance by God in saving the Israel nation. (Moses).
6. Although not an Israelite woman, when her daughter was sick, she went to Jesus to ask him to save her (Canaanite woman).
7. When God asked him to sacrifice his son, he obediently followed God and God spared his son (Abraham).

#### C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read the biblical texts responsibly. Explain that the OT reading has been fulfilled by the NT reading.
2. Present excerpts of the exegesis and companion guide and ask the class to paraphrase them.
  - a. *Exegesis.* God is offering another perspective to see God's saving act through instruments which may be seen by many as impossible such as Mary; who is both woman and not yet married. She had also shown her rootedness in the faith that God is in control in whatever may happen.

- b. *Companion guide.* To know Jesus, one must know his mother, Mary. What kind of a person was Mary? Not born to a family of means or high position, Mary didn't bring anything into her marriage with Joseph.

Mary was certainly Jesus' first teacher of the Jewish Scriptures. As a devout mother, she impressed on her children's young minds Israel's heroic history and its heroes like Moses, the tribal judges and the prophets. Jesus saw how Mary struggled as a mother and provider of the family.

- c. Owing to her husband's early death, Mary was left alone to look after her family. How did she perform that task? Using the two column note, supply the missing details.

Main Idea	Details
How Mary nurtured her family	Possible answers: She taught them about the faith using the Torah. She answered her children's questions patiently. She took her children to the synagogue. She took care of their physical needs. She always prayed for God's providence. (Expect other answers.)

#### D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Ask these questions.

1. What is Mary's social origin? (Mary is a common folk. She doesn't belong to any royal descendants. She is engaged to Joseph who is also a commoner.)
2. Why was Mary perplexed upon hearing Angel Gabriel's good news? (She will be pregnant despite being a virgin and still unmarried.)
3. How did she accept God's call? (Mary boldly accepted God's will by submitting herself to God as a humble servant. This shows the spirituality of her courageous faith even if it will cost Mary her honor and respectability in the community.)
4. Is there a significance of Mary's social status when she was chosen to be Jesus' mother? Why or why not? (Yes, because she is an example of emptiness that only God can fill. Mary had nothing to offer to God, therefore she submits herself to God's plan.)

#### E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: **"How similar is Mary's way of nurturing her family in faith with parents today?"**

#### F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Tell the class to recall the exercise on naming parents. Ask: "Can you name some parents you know who exhibited similar behavior with those of the characters that have been mentioned in the exercise?"

#### G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing song: "Silent Night! Holy Night!"
3. Closing prayer: "Our God, we praise you for letting us know Mary as she submitted herself to Your Will. May we be like her in responding to Your call of service using the gifts we received from You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."