

# Sunday, December 21, 2008

## Advent Four

### Preparation:

Read the [Canticle](#) and [Gospel](#) for the day over. Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump out at you.

Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yearb/adventb4.htm>

<http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-bwag.htm#ad4>

<http://msssbible.com/newtestament/mothermary.htm>

<http://children.calvarychapel.com/site/pdf/New/Curr165.pdf>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/adv4kles.htm>

<http://www.sundayschoollessons.com/adv4es.htm>

### Gathering:

Materials needed:

Small table or end of one table

Advent Wreath

Candle lighter

Bible & Bookmark

Blue cloth

Newsprint and markers

Bring a newspaper, an envelope with an address, a Christmas card and an angel (the largest one you can bring with you)

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. Gather around the small table or at the end of one table. With the children place the blue cloth on the table. Have them help you place the Advent wreath, and the Bible on the cloth. Light four candles on the wreath.

Pray the following prayer together:

**God be with us, as we prepare,**

**Jesus be with us, as we prepare,**

**Holy Spirit be with us, as we prepare,**

**Keep our hearts open for the coming new day.**

**Amen.**

Blow out the candles. Ask the children how they get important news. (*Wait for their responses.*) Lay out the newspaper and ask the children if they get important news from the news. Do the same with the envelope and the Christmas card and wait for their responses. Now bring out the angel. Ask the children if they have ever received an important piece of news from an angel. (*Wait for their responses.*) Tell the children that today they are going to hear a story about a message, a very important one, that an angel brought to Jesus' mother.

**Story Time:**

Materials needed:

A comfortable place to tell the story – on the floor with cushions or around a table

Angel from opening activity

*This story is told from the perspective of the angel Gabriel. Place the angel in the centre of the story area so that all the children can see it.*

Gabriel, one of the chief angels in heaven, was thinking about the assignment that God had just given him. It was the most amazing news. He wondered how the young woman he was going to give the news would react to it. Gabriel shook himself and set off to find Mary.

Gabriel found Mary in her home. Mary was going to marry a man named Joseph. She was very young. Mary loved God with all her heart. Gabriel took a deep breath. He said to Mary, "Hello blessed one. God is with you."

Mary was perplexed by what this being was saying to her. Gabriel could see that she was confused. He decided to try another to get her attention. He said, "Don't be afraid Mary. God loves you. God has sent me here with an important message for you. You are going to get pregnant and have a son. You will name him Jesus."

Mary stood silently listening to everything that Gabriel had to say. Gabriel could tell by the look on her face that she was trying to take it all in. Gabriel continued with his message from God. He said, "Jesus will be great. He will be the Son of God. Jesus' kingdom will have no end."

Mary looked at the angel, called Gabriel, and said, "How can this be? I am not married yet."

Gabriel said, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and God will make you pregnant. This is why the boy Jesus shall be called the Son of God. Remember your cousin Elizabeth – she has become pregnant in her old age with a son. Remember, Mary, nothing is impossible with God."

Gazing at the angel, Mary said, "Here I am. I am the servant of the Lord. I am ready to do what God would have me do."

Gabriel gave Mary and a loving and thankful look. At that point he left and went to his home.

*With the children look at the angel and then say the following prayer with them:*

**Holy God, thank you for angels – your messengers!**

**Holy God, thank you for Mary – mother of Jesus!**

**Holy God, thank you for love – shown in Jesus!**

**Amen.**

**Response:****Idea #1: Angel Ornament**

*Making an ornament will allow the children a chance to share the angel's message with their families.*

*Materials needed:* construction paper, white paper, doilies, glue, glitter, markers staples and stapler

*Instructions:* Cut the construction paper in half horizontally. Cut circles that are 5 cm/2 inches in diameter out of the white paper for the angel heads – you will need one for each child. With the children make cones out of the construction paper halves – using the stapler to connect the edges of the cone. Fold the doily in half and glue it to the back side of the cone. Have the children draw a face on the circle with the markers. They may want to use the glitter to decorate the top of the head. With the glue or the stapler attach the head to the top of the cone. If there is time spread some glue onto the cone and the doily and then sprinkle glitter on them to make them sparkly.

### **Idea #2: Angel Christmas Card**

*The children can share the message of the angel to Mary through the making of a Christmas card.*

*Materials needed:* card stock, heavy cardboard, crayons, scissors, angel shape from bottom of lesson, markers

*Instructions:* Copy the angel shape at bottom of lesson and cut it out. On the heavy cardboard trace the angel shape and cut out enough so that each child has one. Show the children how to place the heavy cardboard angel on top of the card stock. Get them to use the crayons to shade around the edges of the stencil so that when they lift the shape up what will show up on the card stock is the shape of the angel outlined with the crayon. If there is room on the card they may want to put more than one angel image. With the children come up with something from the story that they can put on the front and inside of the card as a message. Suggest to the children that they think about who they want to share the message of the angel with this Christmas and who they want to give the card to.

### **Idea #3: Prayers of Hope**

*With these prayers the children will be able to share their hopes for their families, their communities and the world.*

*Materials needed:* white paper, pens or pencils, newsprint and markers, seasonal stickers

*Instructions:* Ask the children to name the key messages of hope that the angel Gabriel gave to Mary. Write them up on the newsprint. With the children come up with a response to the each prayer petition – it could be something like “God is with us” or “We are your servants God”. Explain that they are going to write prayers that they can say by themselves or with their families over the next few days to get ready for the coming of Jesus’ birth. The prayers should focus on God’s hope for the world – start locally and move up to global hopes. Work with the children to help them write their prayers on to the white paper. If you want the children could decorate their prayers with the stickers. Encourage them to share their prayers with their families. If you have time you could use the prayers to finish up the session.

### **Closing:**

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candles. Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

**For a time to prepare,  
For a time to learn,  
For a time to prepare,  
We thank you God. Amen.**

### **Angel Shape**

