St. Joseph's *Children's Liturgy of the Word*



Advent Year B

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https://www.stjosephsmalvern.org/childrens-liturgy-resources



The Annunciation – from above a font in Luca Italy © Carol Ann Harnett 2016.

St. Joseph is the patron saint of the family, and the family is the "domestic Church." These sheets were developed to support my parish of St. Joseph in Great Malvern, Worcestershire, but they are now used by parishes and schools all over the country. As always, feedback and suggestions are most welcome.

Sunday Mass is the cornerstone of our week; These resources are designed to be used in a family setting or in Children's Liturgy of the Word at Mass, or in the classroom. Please make them your own and feel free to pass them on for free.

Happy New Year

Advent marks the start of the Church's year. This year is Year B; and for most of the year on Sundays we hear from St. Mark's Gospel. The cycle of the liturgical year is something that we repeat again and again of course, but it may be more helpful to think of it as a spiral. We revisit the same feast and solemnities, but each year in a different place in our relationship with Jesus Christ. He is the centre of the Church's year and so every season we dwell on a different aspect of our salvation in Him.

Advent is about preparing for Christ's second coming in the fullness of time but of course it's also about being prepared to celebrate the first coming of Christ as a baby 2,000 years ago. With children and the commerciality of Christmas it's hard not to dwell on presents, decorations, food, parties and family gatherings, all of which are really important. However, these things are meaningless unless Christ is at the centre. One way we can keep Christ at the centre of our Christmas preparations is to have a crib which is built over the four weeks – each day adding something new to it, or as well as the chocolate advent calendar, have a prayer or scripture calendar as well. On the third and fourth Sundays of Advent a crib-making activity is suggested. If you do this, please send photos. Finally, there are several suggested activities depending upon the time and resources you have available.

There are Four Dimensions of our Faith, and the activities all reflect one or more of each of these dimensions.

Professing the faith (speaking about it and learning the faith)

Celebrating our faith in the liturgy and the sacraments



Living the faith in Christ (making choices by the grace of Jesus Christ)

A prayer-filled life where the Our Father takes centre stage

Children's liturgy of the word for this week



Gospel for 1st Sunday of Advent Year B



Mark 13:33-37

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.

Therefore, stay awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning — lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.'

The Gospel of the Lord

R/: ***Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ***

Discussion on the Gospel

Questions to use if making the liturgical wheel



Today there is an option of making a liturgical year wheel or a paper advent wreath, so a bit of preparation is needed. If you are planning to make a wreath (either real or paper) I the questions on the next page might be more useful. Light the first candle on the advent wreath before reading the Gospel.

Announce: This is New Year's Day! The first Sunday in Advent is the start of the Church's year. The Church's year begins with a look to the future coming of Christ in glory. No one knows when that will be, it could be tonight, it could be in thousands of years. The message is to live as if Christ is coming today, and then we will not be caught unawares.

Q: What did Jesus ask His disciples/us to do? (A. Stay awake.)

Q: Does Jesus mean that we can never go to bed? (A. No, of course not.)

Q: Jesus is saying that we need to always think about Him and live every day as if we might meet Him at any moment. The Church does this all the time, and every day keeps Jesus at the centre of everything she does. Through the year, like in nature, the Church has different seasons and so thinks about Jesus in a different way. What season of the Church's year starts today? (A: Advent.)

Q: All the different seasons of the Church's year are called the "liturgical year." Today is New Year's Day for the Church. What do we do in January for New Year's Day? (A: Make resolutions.)

Q: We can make some new year's resolutions for the new Church's year too. What could we decide to do better for our life of faith? (A: Open – but help the children to focus on prayer etc.)

Q: What is the next season after Advent that the Church celebrates? (A: Christmas.)

Q: What other seasons does the Church celebrate? (A: Ordinary time [green], Lent [purple] Easter[white/gold] and saints' days [red or white usually].)

Q: Show the liturgical year wheel and say that this is a good way to keep up with the liturgical year. Where should the arrow point now? (A: To Advent.)

Q: What colour is Advent? (: Purple – show the purple cloth on the focal table.)

Q: What other colours are there? (A: Green, white, red [some have black for All Souls Day.])

End with a time of prayer asking Jesus to help us to stay awake and keep thinking about Him throughout the day, every day.



Discussion on the Gospel – questions to use if making a wreath

Announce: This is New Year's Day! The first Sunday in Advent is the start of the Church's year. The Church's year begins with a look to the future coming of Christ in glory. No one knows when that will be, it could be tonight, it could be in thousands of years. The message is to live as if Christ is coming today, and then we will not be caught unawares.

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Q: What is the next season after Advent that the Church celebrates? (A: Christmas.)

Q: During Advent there are lots of different things we can do to get ready for celebrating Jesus' birthday at Christmas. What can we do?? (A: Open but help top steer responses towards spiritual things.)

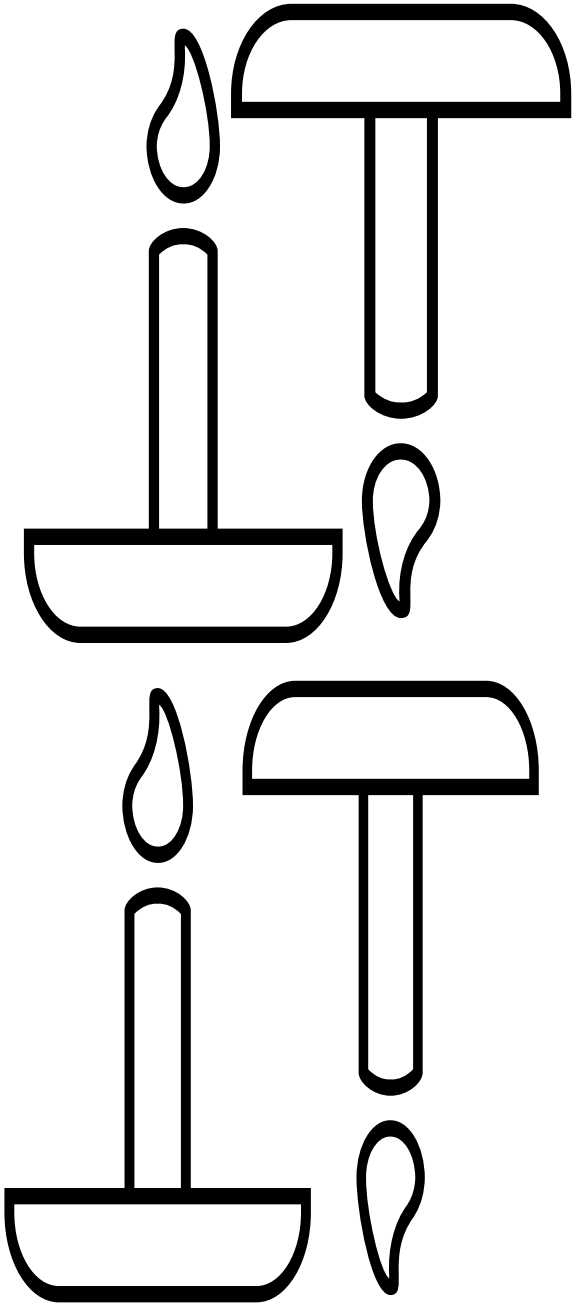
Q: Indicate the Advent wreath Show How many candles? (A: 4.)

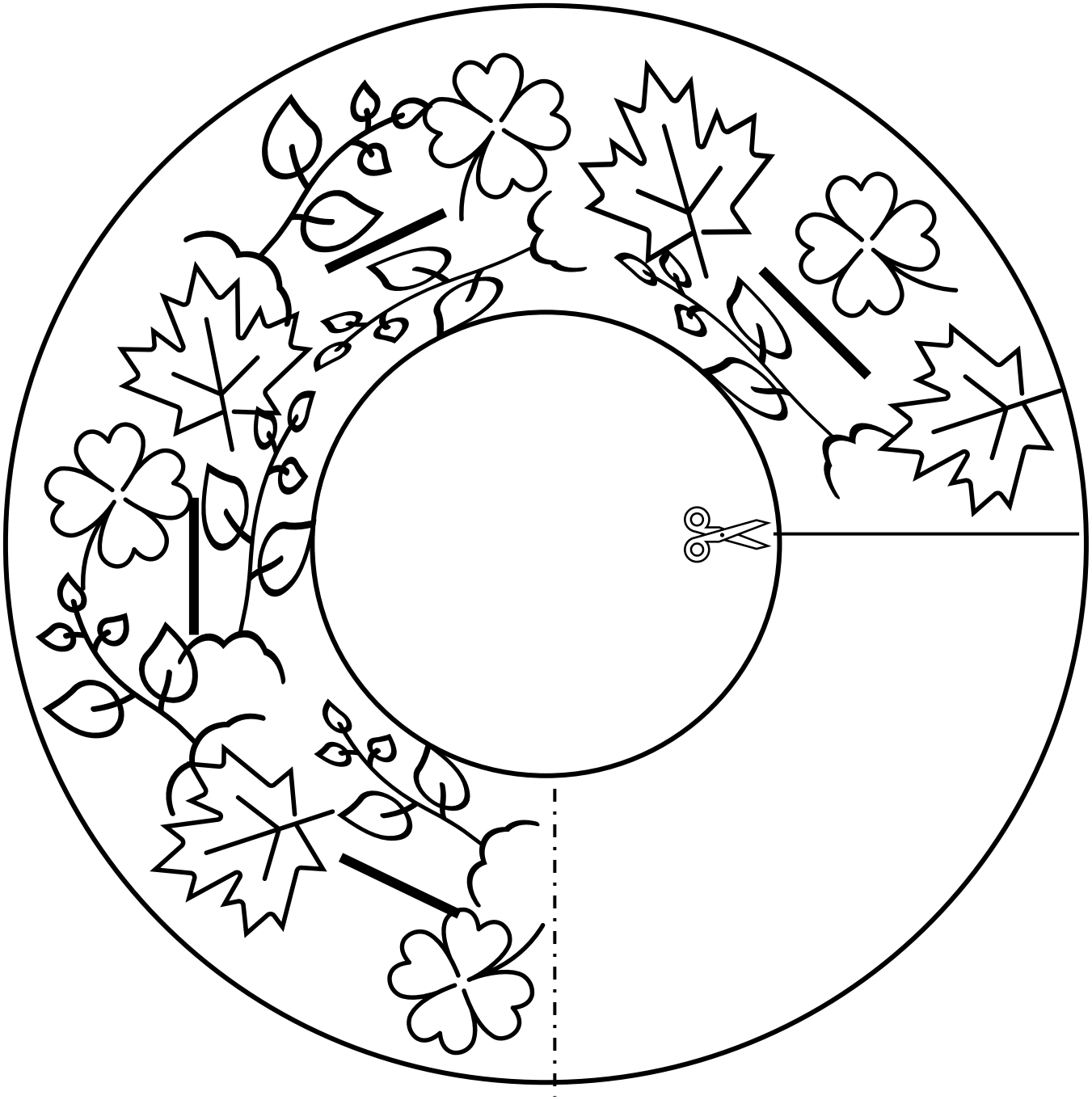
Q: Why are there 4 candles? (: One for each week of Advent.)

Q: What other colours are they? (A: Purple and 3 rose(pink).)

Q: Why are they those colours? (A: Because they are the liturgical colours and on the 3rd Sunday of Lent we rejoice as its nearly time to celebrate Jesus' birthday, so the priest wears a Rose coloured chasuble.)

End with a time of prayer asking Jesus to help us to stay awake and keep thinking about Him throughout the day, every day as we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday.





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Instructions for making the advent wreath.

1. Print the above page on paper or card.
2. Cut out the ring with one slit to the centre ring (where the scissors are)
3. Cut each of a slit in the wreath (where the short black lines are. This is best done by folding the paper/card along the slit and making a small snip with scissors.
4. Cut out the candles.
5. Colour in the leaves on the wreath and the candles (three candles purple and one pink)
6. Colour in the flame of one purple candle – leave the others blank to complete each week.
7. Fold the ring so that the blank quarter sits under the coloured section and either glue together or staple.
8. Slot the candles through each of the slits with the pink candle opposite the candle with the coloured flame, and glue in place.

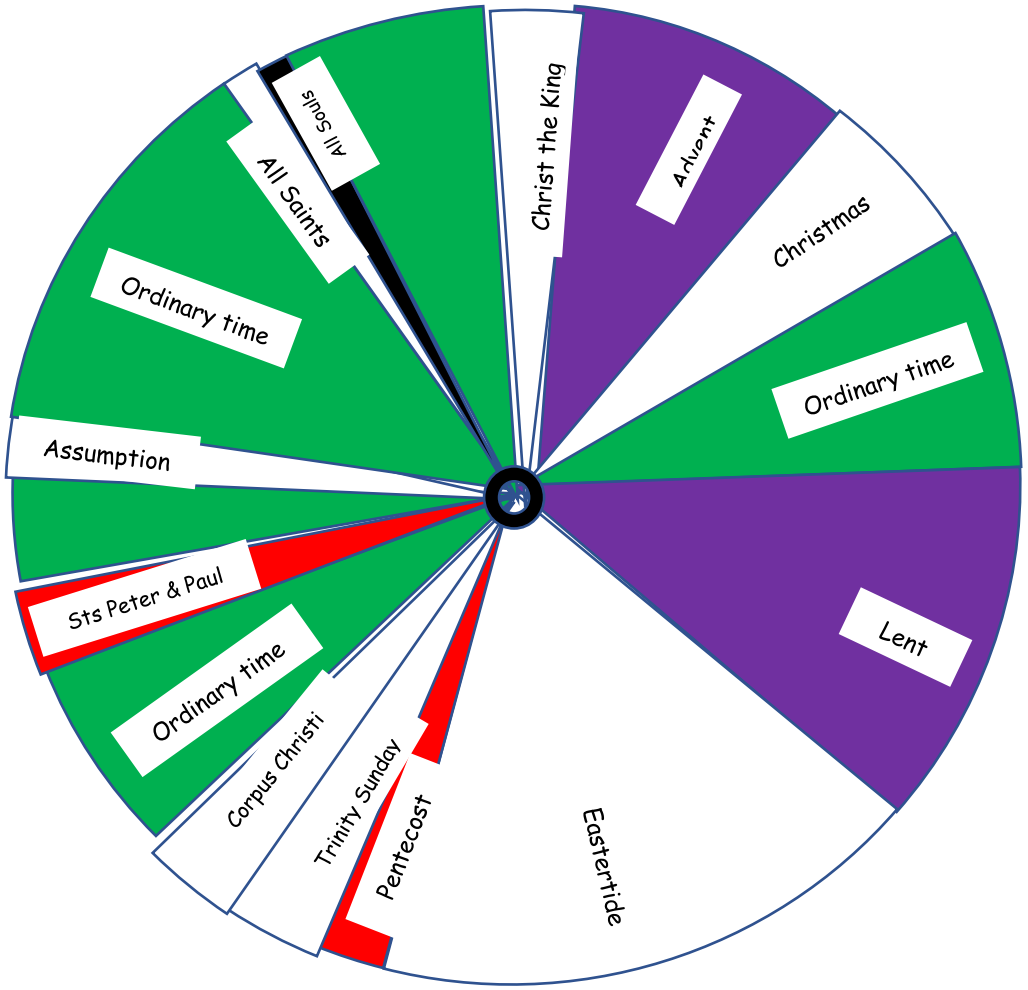
The example (pictured) does not have the leaves added to the wreath and is made out of paper. Card would be better. Also on this prototype, the candles are thinner.



How to make this Liturgical Year wheel:

1. It would be a good idea to print this on card for stability
2. Cut out the circle and the arrow below
3. Punch a hole in the bottom of the arrow and in the centre of the wheel
4. Place the arrow on the wheel and fix with a split pin.
5. Turn it so that it points to Advent.







Children's liturgy of the word for this week

Gospel for 2nd Sunday Advent Year B

Mark 1:1-8
The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." '

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptised by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt round his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, 'After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord. **R:/Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Discussion on the Gospel



- ✞ Light the advent wreath
- ✞ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

Q: This is the beginning of Marks' Gospel. What is the Good News? (A: Jesus is the Good News because He has come to lead us to His Father).

Q: Where did John the Baptist appear? (A: In the wilderness)

Q: What was he saying? (A: "Prepare a way for the Lord…someone is coming after me who is more powerful… will baptise with the Holy Spirit…")

Q: Who is John the Baptist talking about? (A: Jesus)

Q: What will Jesus do? (A: Baptise with the Holy Spirit)

Q: When do we receive the Holy Spirit? (A: We first receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptised and then at Confirmation this gift of the Holy Spirit is strengthened (made stronger) in us. However, whenever we receive any of the Sacraments, the Holy Spirit comes to us. The Holy Spirit also helps us whenever we ask Him!)

Q: How does the Holy Spirit help us? (A: He guides us and helps us to be strong especially when we are tempted to do something that we should not do. He helps us to understand right from wrong, and to go out and do nice and kind things.

Q: The Holy Spirit also helps us to be sorry for our sins – the bad things we do? When do we say sorry for our sins, at Mass? (A: At the "I confess … or children may respond "Lord have mercy".)

Finish by Inviting the children to silently think of something bad they had done or for when they have made someone sad (in their minds, not aloud) and then leading them children in praying "Lord Have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" together, encouraging the children to strike their breasts each time.

If you can get a dish of holy water, invite the children to dip their fingers in and slowly make the Sign of the Cross as a reminder of their own Baptism.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy

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Gospel for the 3rd Sunday of Advent Year B

John 1:6-8,19-28



There was a man, sent from God
whose name was John.
He came as a witness,
to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord", as the prophet Isaiah said.' (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, 'Then why are you baptising, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptise with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.' These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord. **R:/Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Children's liturgy of the word for this week





Discussion on the Gospel

- ✞ Light the advent wreath
- ✞ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

This is the account of John the Baptist in John's Gospel and repeats some of last week's message.

Q: Who sent John the Baptist? (A: God.)

Q: How is John the Baptist described? (A: As a witness.)

Q: What is a witness? (A: Someone who tells others what they know or what they have seen or found out.)

Q: What does John the Baptist know about Jesus? (A: That He is coming and that He is so important that John the Baptist is not fit (worthy) of undoing His sandals).

Q: When was Jesus born? (A: At Christmas.)

Q: Where was He born? (A: In a stable in Bethlehem.)

Q: When He was born, some angels appeared to some shepherds on the hillside. The angels were also witnesses, what did they say? (A: I bring you good news of great joy for a saviour has been born [Lk. 2 10:11].)

Q: John the Baptist told people to get ready for Jesus and Jesus was born 2,000 years ago. Every year at Christmas we remember that the Son of God came and came, and one way we can do this is to set up a crib scene at home. What can we put in our crib scene? (A: Open.)

Q: One of the most important people we put in the crib scene is Mary, who is she? (A: Jesus' mother.)

Finish by praying the Hail Mary together.

On the next two Sundays the children can make crib figures – instructions on the next two pages. I suggest that Mary and baby Jesus are made this week and Joseph next week. If there is extra time next week, some shepherds could be made with additional blank figures.

Alternatively see the following page for another suggested activity.

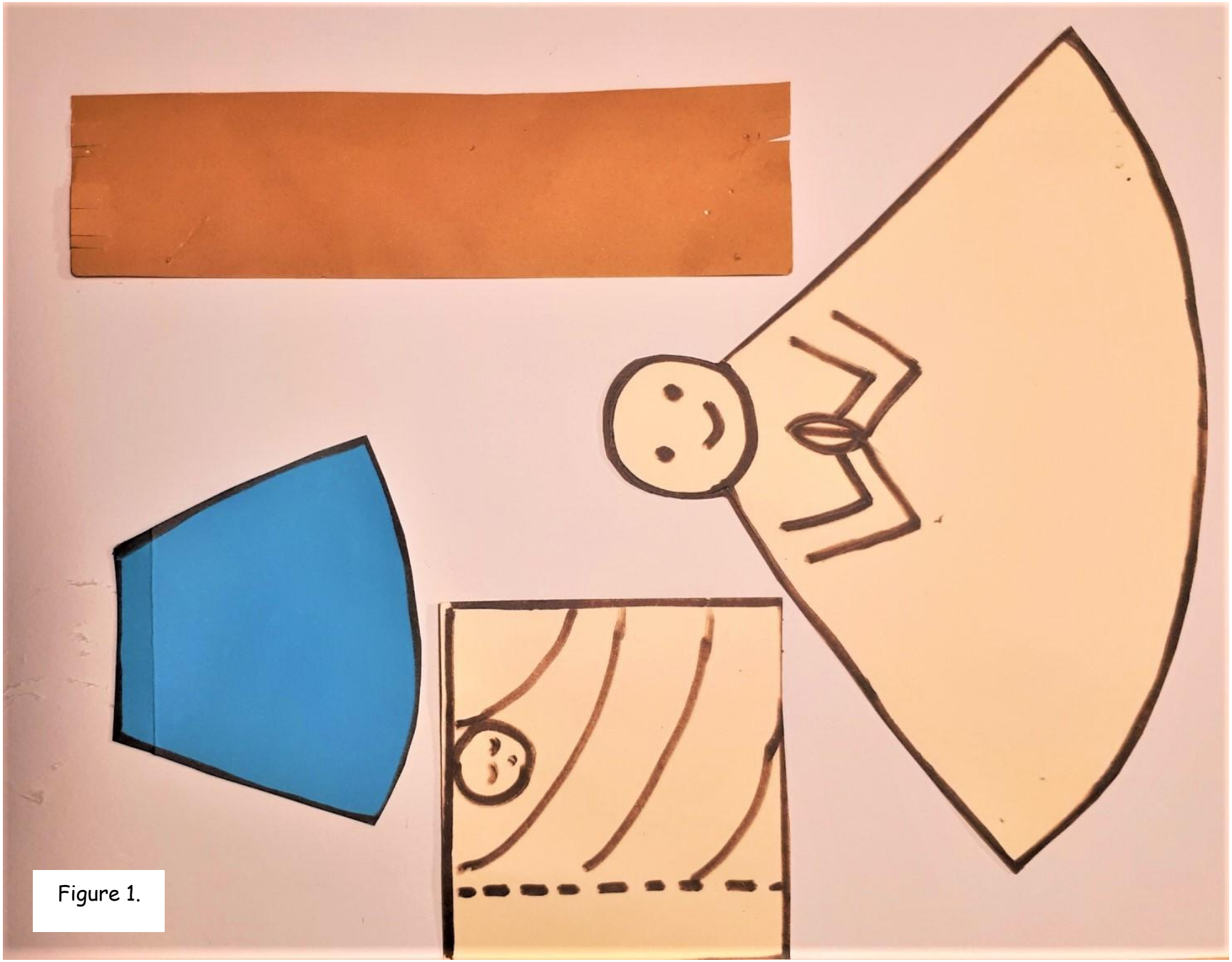


Figure 1.

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How to make these crib figures.

1. To Make Mary:
    a. Cut out the shapes in figure 1.
    b. If desired, colour in Mary and Baby Jesus.
    c. Roll up the body and fix at the back with staple or paper clip (see figure 2). (Glue may not hold fast enough)
    d. Fold Mary's head-dress along the line on the shape
    e. Glue in place on the top of her head.
    f. Roll up and glue "Baby Jesus" at the back.
2. To make Joseph (and shepherds etc)
    a. Make further copies of the body shape and cut out
    b. Colour in his dress
    c. Roll up and fix as above
    d. Glue or staple Joseph's shawl and slip over the head.

When finished, maybe arrange in a box as a stable scene.

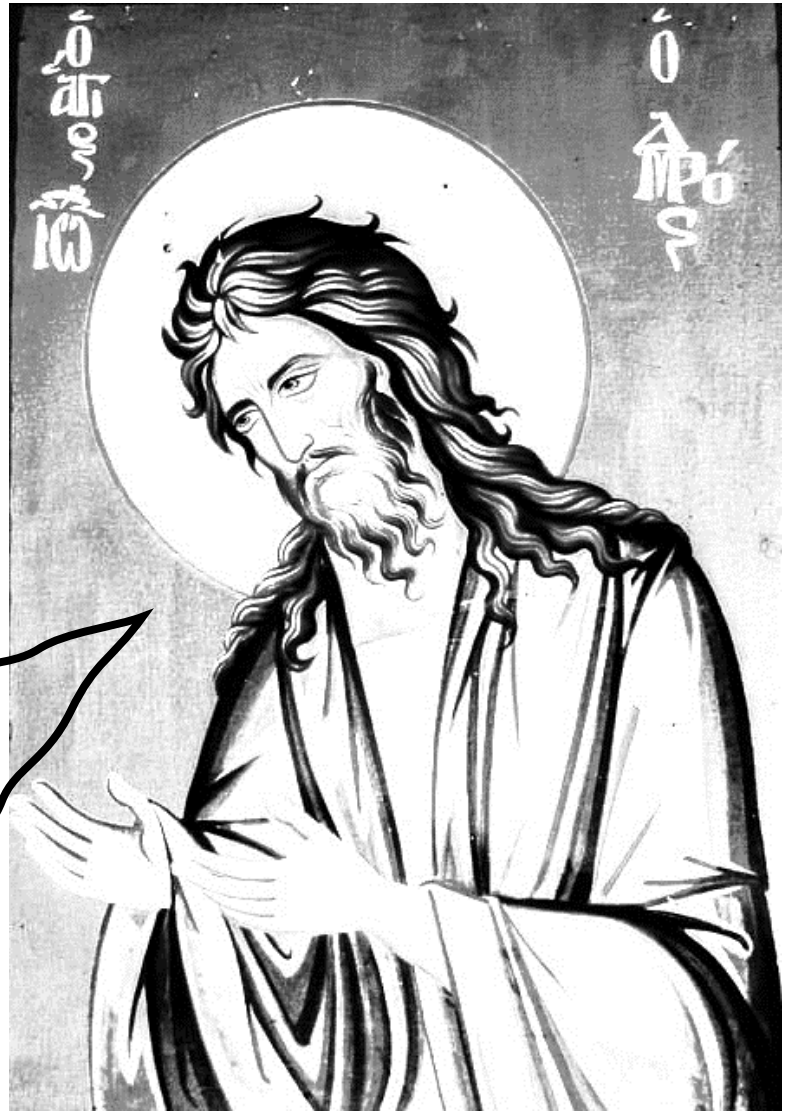


Figure 2.









Write in the speech bubble what John the Baptist said and then colour in the picture of him.

Gospel for the 4th Sunday of Advent Year B
Luke 1:26-38

At that time: The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!' But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'

And Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?' And the angel answered 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 called holy — the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord. **R:/Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Children's liturgy of the word for this week





Discussion on the Gospel

- ✞ Light the advent wreath
- ✞ Introduce the Gospel liturgically

We are now coming to the heart of the Good News of the coming of Jesus Christ. This is the classic and most wonderful account of the Annunciation. Either use these questions or the set of questions on the Fra Angelico painting of the Annunciation at the end, which are probably more suited to school use.

Q: What does the Angel Gabriel say to Mary? (A: Rejoice, Highly favoured, the Lord is with you.... (and also, about Mary bearing (giving birth to) a Son who will be son of the Most High and will be given the throne of his ancestor David)

Q: What have we learned about the baby that Mary will have? (A: He will be called Jesus, He will be the Son of the Most High (Most High means God), He is a descendant of King David...)

Q: How was this going to happen? (A: The Holy Spirit would overshadow Mary.)

Q: What does Mary say at the end? (A: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let what you have said be done to me").

Q: What does this mean? (A: That Mary gives the Father permission for her to be the mother of His divine Son, in other words, Mary says yes to God.)

Q: As the Holy Spirit made Jesus present in Mary's womb (tummy) the Holy Spirit makes Jesus present at Mass. When does He do that? (A: When He changes the bread and wine into Jesus Body and Blood for Holy Communion.)

Q: What are we doing at that part of Mass? (A: We are kneeling.)

Q: What do we hear at that most important part of Mass? (A: A bell ringing.)

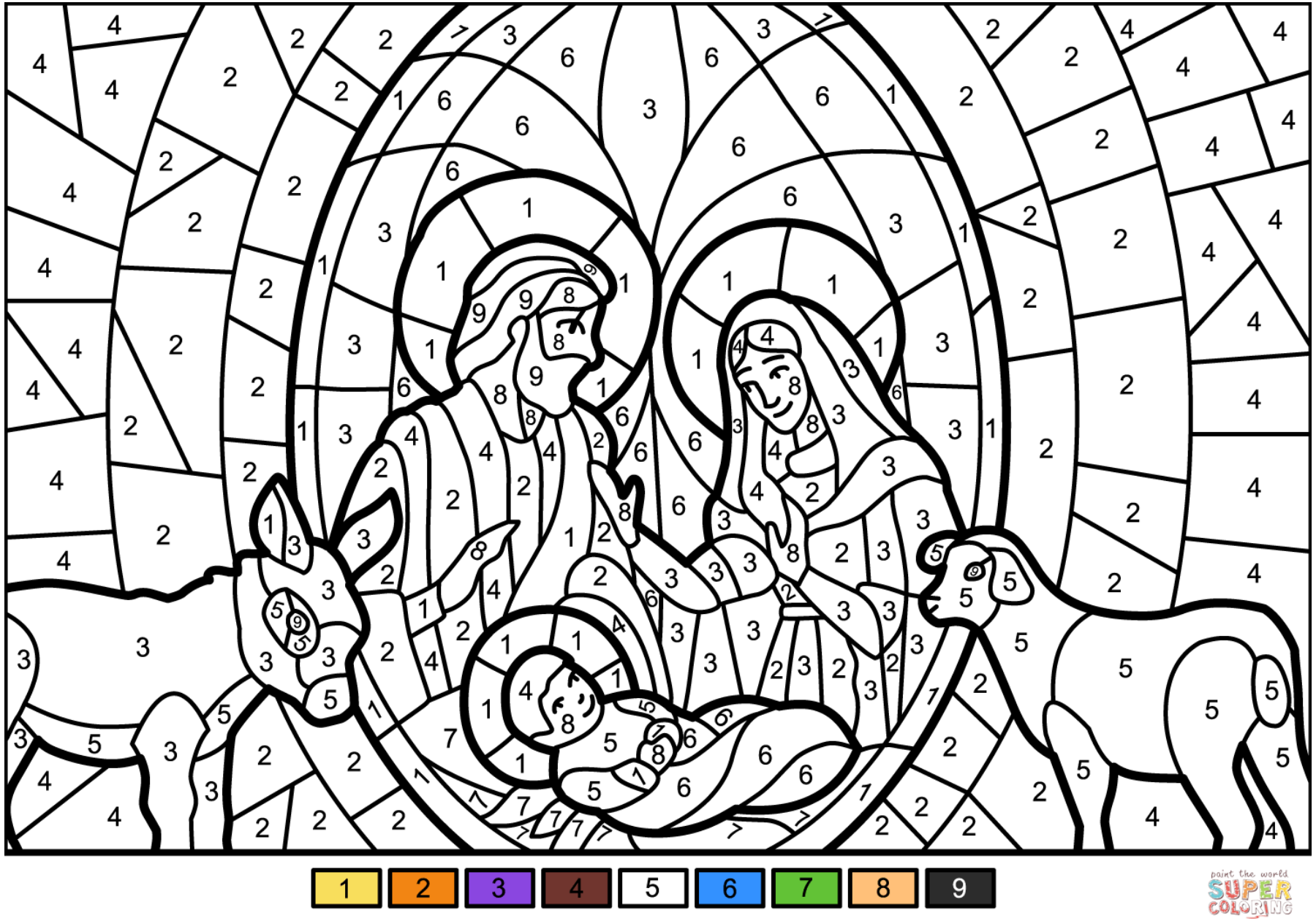
Q: We can make a short private prayer when the priest raises (lifts up) the Host and Chalice. What can we say? (A: Open, but you can suggest something like "I love you Jesus".)

Let's just finish by shutting our eyes and imagining we are looking at Jesus in the crib. Let's say in our hearts, "I love you Jesus"

Either carry on with the crib scene began last week, or colour in one of the attached pictures, or you can use the attached reflection on the Fra Angelico painting which the children can copy and colour in.

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9
paint the world
SUPER
COLORING

The Beauty of Art

On the last page is a picture by a 15th century artist called "Fra Angelico". This is one of his most famous paintings and it was originally painted as an altarpiece (to go behind the altar during Mass). When this was painted altars were against the East Wall of the Church, and the priest faced East so was facing the same way as everyone else. (Church Tradition is that when Jesus comes again, He will come from the East, so Mass was always said with everyone facing East, not just the congregation, looking for Christ to come again.)

Here are some discussion points about this picture which will help you to understand the mystery of the why Jesus came.

Q: Why is Mary wearing blue and red? (A: Blue, because she is chosen by God (note the cloak goes over her as if God has laid in on her shoulders) and red because it is a sign of humanity, humility and martyrdom. Mary did not die for her faith, but she suffered watching Jesus die)

Q: What do you notice about the way the Angel Gabriel and Mary are looking at each other? (A: Eye-contact; Mary, who is full of grace, (has no sin in her) can look directly at the Angel Gabriel and know that she is loved by the Father. Note also that the Angel Gabriel is bowing towards her. In every mention of meeting angels in the Old Testament, people bowed to the angels. No angel ever bowed at people. This shows us how unique and special Mary is.)

Q: The two figures at the top left are Adam and Eve, being sent out of the garden of Eden because they disobeyed God. But before they left, God promised that a descendant of Eve would defeat the devil/Satan. Jesus is that descendant of Eve. What colour is the ground under Adam and Eve's feet? (A: Brown/bare, to indicate sin and death.)

Q: See the fence below Adam and Eve. In front there is lots of greenery and lots of little flowers. What do you think that means? (A: flowers are a sign of the new life and joy Jesus brings.)

Q: See the single palm tree on the edge of the building? A Palm tree is a sign of victory and a tree is a sign of Jesus' cross which brought victory over the Devil. Who appears to be walking into the top leaves of the tree? (A: Adam and Eve)

Q: Why do you think that Fra Angelico painted the picture like that? (A: Jesus will be born to Mary and will die on the Cross to set all people free from sin, including Adam and Eve.)

Q: See the red curtain in the room behind Mary. A red curtain in Sacred Art means the Temple, which had a big red curtain in the middle separating the holy of holies [the holiest place] from the main part where ordinary people could go. The Holy of Holies was too sacred for ordinary people to go into, only priests could and they, only once a year. When Jesus died, the Temple Curtain was torn in two (Mt. 27:51). Why do you think that Fra Angelico has painted a red curtain here? (A: To show that the baby who was to be born would be the one who would die on the cross for us and would end the separation between God and man which began with the original sin of Adam and Eve.)

Q: See the Holy Spirit in a bright light above Mary's head? In the Gospel we read that the Holy Spirit would overshadow Mary, and Fra Angelico has painted the Holy Spirit above Mary's head. The overshadowing of the Holy Spirit made it possible for baby Jesus to be born. At Mass, the priest asks the Father to send His Holy Spirit over the bread and wine. Why? (A: The Holy Spirit comes down over the bread and wine and changes it to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ)

Q: In the account of the Annunciation, it is by the action of the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to earth (still inside Mary) and at Mass, the action of the Holy Spirit makes Jesus present on the Altar, even though it still looks like bread and wine. Note that Fra Angelico paints Mary sitting on a gold throne. Why do you think that he did that? (A: Jesus is the new King, a descendant of King David, so it really his throne that Mary is sitting on. At Mass we use gold and/or silver chalices and our tabernacle is gold, as a suitable throne for Jesus the King.)

Q: There are some other things to look out for: The stars on the ceiling above Mary indicate God's promise to Abraham that he would have more descendants than stars and through Jesus, Abraham is our spiritual father; the dark sky around Adam and Eve is also a sign of sin; the figure in the roundel is Isaiah who foretold that the virgin would give birth (Isaiah7:14); the book on Mary's lap is a sign of Jesus who is the Word of God; the words in gold are a summary of the conversation between Mary and the Angel Gabriel. They indicate that God is Trinity because one line goes from the Angel Gabriel towards Mary's womb showing us that she will have a baby (Jesus Christ, God the Son), another line curves up to say that Mary will be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, and the middle line is Mary's response to the Father. It is upside-down indicating that she is talking not to the Angel Gabriel but to God the Father.

