

Today's Catholic Teacher

Christmas Prayer Service

By Jean Grant

OPENING SONG: "Every Valley" verse 1

LEADER: The Angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation.

ALL: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

LEADER: Mary was amazed when the angel told her that she would be the mother of Jesus.

ALL: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

LEADER: Soon, Mary went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth. After many years of praying to God for a child, Elizabeth was now pregnant with a son, John the Baptist.

READER: Zacharias, the husband of Elizabeth, was filled with the Holy Spirit and thanked God for his son, who would prepare the way for the Messiah. When Mary arrived at Elizabeth's home, Elizabeth said that her unborn child was leaping with joy.

ALL: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

LEADER: Before Jesus' birth, the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, decreed that a census would take place in the nation. Joseph, a member of the line of David, had to go to Bethlehem to register. Mary's baby would be born soon, but she went with him to register in Bethlehem.

READER: There was no room for them in the inn, so Mary and Joseph stayed in a stable. After Jesus, the Messiah, was born, he was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

SONG: "Away in a Manger" or "Silent Night"

LEADER: Shepherds tended their sheep on the fields outside of Bethlehem. They were startled when an angel appeared to them. The angel told them not to be frightened. The Savior and Messiah was born that night in Bethlehem!

ALL: The angel was joined by a host of others — heavenly armies — praising God. "Glory to God in the highest heaven," they sang, "and peace on earth."

Jean Grant is a retired teacher from St. Charles, Missouri.

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