

LESSON 28: A Time of Waiting

AIM


To share some idea of Jesus, origin and ancestry. (5.1.5, 5.4.5, 6.1)

OUTCOME

Learners understand the meaning of the season of Advent



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Egg-timer (1)
- * Bible (2)
- * Tree drawings (4)
- *  Copies of worksheet (4) ➔

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Learning to Wait:** Show the children an egg timer. Ask the children to close their eyes and to open them when they think the sand has run through from the top into the bottom. Talk about time and how it seems to slow down when we are waiting for something. When we have something interesting to do, it is easier to wait. Our special time for waiting for Christmas is called Advent.
- 2 **The Annunciation** [Luke 1:26-38]: Tell the story with a sense of mounting excitement and emphasise the fact that Mary and Joseph had to wait with eager anticipation for the baby Jesus.

One day, long, long ago, a young girl knelt down to pray just as she did every day. Her name was Mary and she was very special to God. Just then an angel appeared. The angel's name was Gabriel. "Hail Mary," he said. (This means 'Hello Mary!') "God is with you. God wants you to be the mother of a special baby boy. His name will be Jesus and he will grow up and he will change the world forever."

Mary was a little afraid at first. The angel Gabriel said, "Do not be afraid. You have been blessed by God."


Mary thought for a while and then she said, "Yes. I will be the mother of Jesus. I will do what God asks of me." And with that the angel left her.

Joseph loved Mary very much and he wanted to marry her. He did not understand what Mary had told him. That night Joseph had a dream. The angel told him, "God wants you to marry Mary." Joseph obeyed. He married Mary and he took very good care of her.

Mary grew excited because she was looking forward to being the mother of such a special baby. But she had to wait and wait. Joseph was very happy that he would be able to be the foster father of the baby Jesus. But he too, had to be patient and wait and wait.

- 3 **Jesus' Family Tree:** This is also a good way to revise the stories of the people in Jesus' wider family. Give the children the opportunity of guessing the answers to the following:
 - I am the Light of the World. (Jesus)
 - I am the mother of Jesus, God's son. (Mary)
 - I was a carpenter and a descendant of king David. I was Jesus' foster father. (Joseph)
 - I was the father of King David. (Jesse)
 - I was a singer, poet and a king. (David)
 - I was the son of David. I am known for my great wisdom. (Solomon)
 - I saved my family from starvation. I had a special coat. (Joseph)
 - I led God's people out of Egypt. (Moses)

- I left my country and followed Naomi. I was the great grandmother of King David. (Ruth)
- My name means, “laughter”. (Isaac)
- God made me your father in faith. (Abraham)
- I built an ark and the animals came in two by two. (Noah)
- We were the first people. (Adam and Eve)

4 **Art and Craft:** Talk about the symbols that may represent the ancestors of Jesus, such as a sheaf of barley for Ruth. You will find a number of them on the worksheet.  ⇒ Divide the class into groups so that each group produces a family tree for Jesus. Prepare some large tree drawings on newsprint with the names of the biblical figures written in at various places. The children, in their groups, colour the symbols and cut them out. They then decide which symbol corresponds to which name, and paste them onto the tree. The group add their names to the family tree as brothers and sisters of Jesus. This may be done in a heart shape. The trees are displayed after completion and the children gather round to pray. Below is a key to the symbols on the worksheet. ⇒

5 **Prayer:** We come together, Lord Jesus, to thank you for sharing your life and love with us. Bless us as we remember these special people who came before us. Amen.

SYMBOLS

star	Jesus
saw	Joseph, father of Jesus
harp	David
rainbow	Noah
sheaf	Ruth
apple	Adam & Eve
coat	Joseph, son of Jacob
doll	Mary
tablets	Moses
crown	Solomon



Jesus' Family



LESSON 29: Pointing to Christmas

AIM

To introduce learners to some of the objects and customs associated with Advent and Christmas. (5.1.5)


OUTCOME

Learners are familiar with activities associated with the Christian liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES




- 1 **Advent** is a time of anticipation. We remember what God has done for us and we anticipate what God will continue doing. Have a set of, say, drinking straws to use as a count-down to Christmas. Combine this activity with the Maths lesson. Let the children count the straws which will tell them how many days are left till Christmas. Each day one of the straws is removed from the container.
- 2 **Making an advent calendar:** Make a copy of a December calendar for each child. Children can make a decorative frames or borders for their calendars. The children will also need twenty-five Christmas symbols which are about the same size as the blocks of the calendar. The children will stick a symbol on the calendar to celebrate each day.

December						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25			

- 3 **Advent wreath:** The wreath is a circle which reminds us of God's love that is all around us. The flame reminds us to be a light in God's world. The wreath which we see in church is usually made of evergreen leaves to show that God's love does not change. The four candles are for the four weeks of Advent. Each week another candle is lit. Three candles may be purple and the fourth candle may be pink. The pink one is lit on the third Sunday of Advent. Have an actual wreath to demonstrate. The children colour copies of the wreath according to instructions. See the worksheet.  ⇨



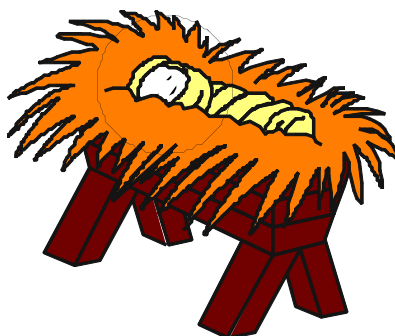
WHAT YOU NEED

- * Drinking straws (1)
- * Copies of the December calendar, sets of Christmas symbols (2)
- * Advent wreath (3)
- *  copies of the worksheet, crayons (3) ⇨
- *  *Light the Advent Candle One* (5)
- * Cardboard tubes, red crepe paper, circles of white paper, cotton wool, glue (7)
- * A shoe box which has been made to look like a manger (8)
- *  *Away in a Manger* (9)

- 4 **Prayer:** (Reflecting on the Advent wreath) The candles remind us that you Jesus are the light of the world. Bring to the world the joy, peace and love that God wants us to have. Help us to bring happiness to each other and give us patience as we wait and prepare for Christmas. Amen.
- 5 **Sing:** *Light the Advent Candle One.*

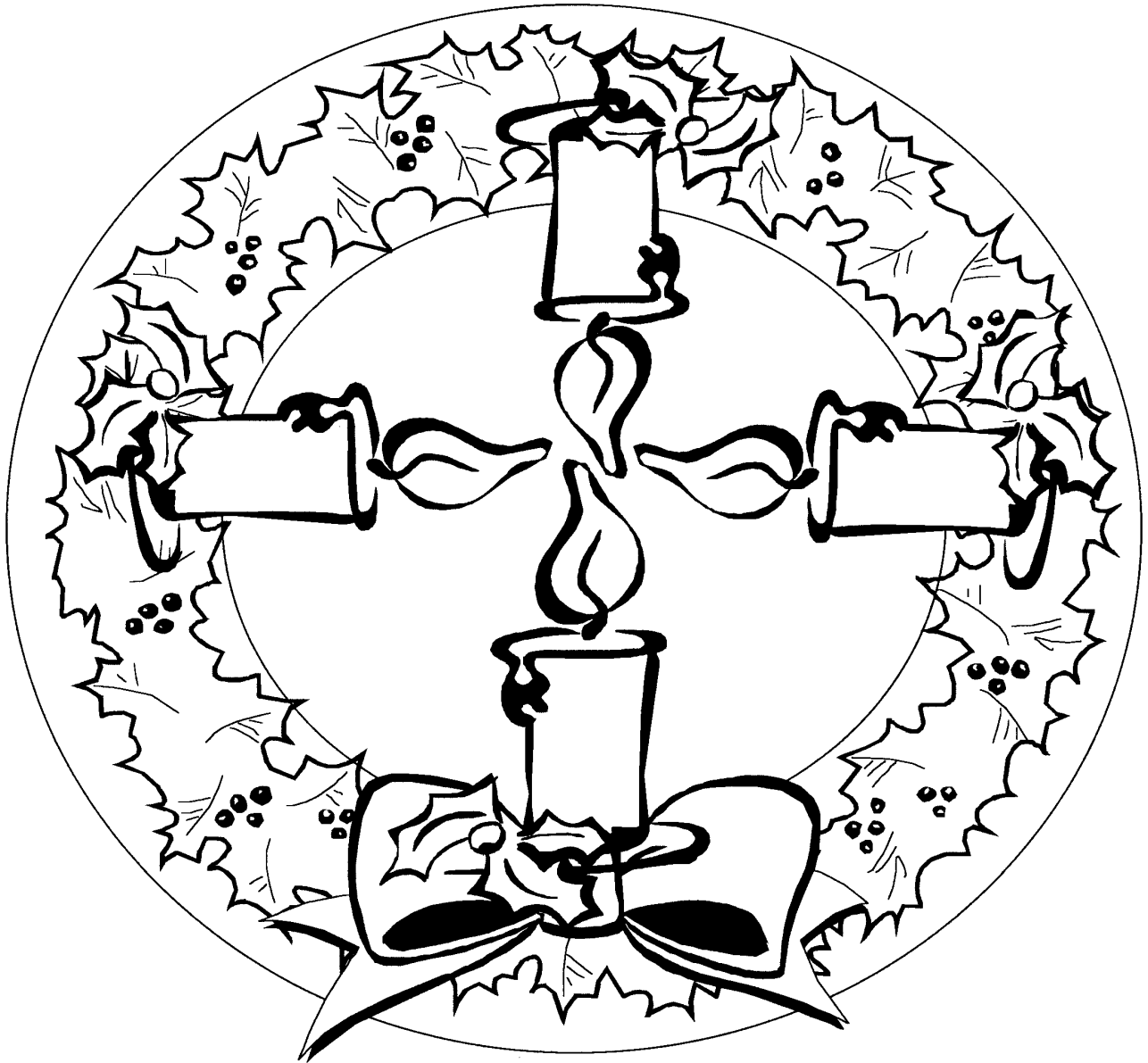
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 **Saint Nicholas** (6 December): The name Santa Claus is derived from 'Saint Nicholas'. Tell the story of the first Father Christmas or Santa Claus. He lived very, very long ago in a country very, very far away. He did not like to see poor people suffering and he would secretly help all those he could. One day some one recognised the generous Bishop Nicholas as he was leaving money for the poor and so that is how we know that it was good St Nicholas who brought gifts to people without any one seeing him do so. People followed Nicholas's good example and began to give gifts to one another. In some countries, like Germany, the Netherlands and Greece, 6 December is a very special day for children. They leave their shoes out to be filled with treats.
- 7 **Making a Santa Claus:** Each child covers a cardboard tube with red crepe paper, by rolling the paper round the tube and then tucking the paper in one end. The other end of the paper can be gathered together and taped to form the hat. A circle of white paper can be stuck on to the tube for the face. Cotton wool can be added for the beard, also round the top of the tube to demarcate the beginning of the hat. A cotton wool ball can be added to the tip of the hat.
- 8 **Preparing a Manger during Advent:** Have the 'manger' displayed. Does anybody know what a manger is? Yes. It's a special box which holds the food for the animals. Talk about baby Jesus being placed in a manger. It would be a hard place for a baby to lie. How can we make it a more comfortable place? We can put straw into the manger to make it a little softer. We are going to provide straw for the manger. The straw will be a symbol of the love we have for Jesus and for each other. Give the children a strip of paper each. Ask the children to think of something kind that they can do for someone else. The children then write their pledge on the strip of paper and put it into the manger. This activity can be repeated at intervals so that the children learn that if you do loving things for others then God's peace will be with you and that is what Christmas is about.

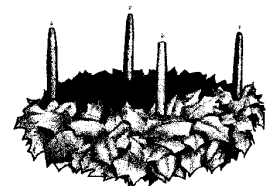


- 9 **Sing:** *Away in a Manger.*

Advent Wreath



Colour three candles purple and one pink.
Colour the flames red, yellow and orange.
Colour the wreath green.
Cut each candle to the base and fold up.



LESSON 30: Waiting for Jesus

AIM

To introduce learners to practices associated with the liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas. (5.1.8)

OUTCOME

Learners are familiar with activities associated with the Christian liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1 An Advent Celebration of Waiting

Many, many years ago, an angel came to visit a young woman named Mary.

ALL: Hail Mary, full of grace

The angel asked Mary to be the mother of Jesus. Mary was happy to say, "Yes!"

ALL: The Lord is with you

The angel asked Joseph to marry Mary and to care for Jesus.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Mary went to visit Elizabeth. She said, "Jesus will come soon."

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. Mary said, "Jesus will come soon."

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come.

The road seemed very long.

The road seemed very bumpy.

The road seemed very twisty...

But Mary smiled and said, "Jesus will come soon."

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come.

And still they travelled towards Bethlehem. And still Mary said, "Jesus will come soon."

When they arrived in Bethlehem, there was no place to stay. Joseph grew worried.

Mary smiled as she said, "Jesus will come soon."

Joseph searched and searched. The innkeeper said, "You can sleep in the stable."

Mary and Joseph thanked the man. Mary said, "Jesus will come soon."

They went into the stable and Joseph made a bed for Mary out of straw. Mary was happy and she said, "Jesus will come soon!"

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * 🎵 *Waitin' by the Window* (2)
- * Cardboard, glue, stars, glitter, tinsel, fabric (4)
- * 🎵 *Come, All Ye Faithful* (5)
- * Plastic bottles, cones, paper cups (6)
- * Materials for decorations and ornaments (8)
- * Materials for Christmas cards (9)

2 **Sing** *Waitin' by the Window.*

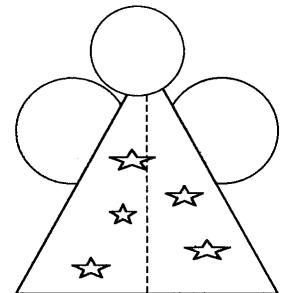
Waiting by the window, (echo)
 Waiting by the window, (echo)
 Watching all the time go. (echo)
 Waiting by the window (echo)
 Just like the people of long ago.

Waiting here for Jesus, (echo)
 Hope he's going to come now. (echo)
 Hope that he will see me, (echo)
 Waiting by the window, (echo)
 Just like people long ago.

Waiting by the window ...
 Waiting by the window ...
 (Fade the song out at the end.)

- 3 **Prayer:** Hail Mary full of grace,
 the Lord is with you.
 Blessed are you among women,
 and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
 Holy Mary, Mother of God,
 pray for us sinners, now,
 and at the hour of our death. Amen.

- 4 **Art and Craft:** Make an angel or angels that will form part of a nativity scene. A simple way to make an angel would be to use a cardboard triangle for the body. Decorate the triangle lavishly with stars, glitter or any shiny materials. Fold the triangle centrally. This will allow it to stand on its own. Add a circle for the head. Draw a face on the circle. Tinsel can be used for hair. Arms can be added as well. Make the wings using two circles. Fabric can be used to make clothes for Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the kings.



- 5 **Sing:** Teach the children a Christmas song such as *O Come, All Ye Faithful*.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 Use plastic bottles, cones or paper cups to make angels or any other **stand up figures**.
- 7 Talk about **Christmas trees** and their symbolism. The evergreen leaves are a sign of life. They remind us that Jesus brings us new life. The lights on the Christmas tree tell us that Jesus is the Light of the World. The star reminds us of the star of Bethlehem.
- 8 **Christmas decorations** and ornaments can be made, such as stars, bells or candles.
- 9 Children make **Christmas cards** for their families.

LESSON 31: Jesus Is Born!

AIM


To introduce learners to practices associated with the liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas. (5.1.8)

OUTCOME

Learners are familiar with activities associated with the Christian liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Simple costumes for the children, a doll, a box for the manger (1)
- * LESSON 30, LEARNING ACTIVITY 4 (2)
- *  Copies of the worksheet (2) ⇨

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Use the following as a simple **play or a tableau**. In a tableau the children are required to enter on cue and then to sit still in their places. The costumes can be made from sheets, towels and gowns. The angels can wear tinsel for halos. You will need children to take the part of Mary, Joseph, the innkeeper and his wife, angels, shepherds, and the three wise men. Some children may want to represent animals.

READER 1: Mary and Joseph went down to Bethlehem.

ALL: Why did they go to Bethlehem?

READER 2: They went there because the ruler of the country said all the people had to be counted in the town of their ancestors.

ALL: What happened when they got there?

READER 3: They looked for a place to stay.

ALL: Did they find a place?

READER 1: There was no room at the inn.

ALL: Was there no room at all?

(The innkeeper shakes his head sadly.)

READER 2: The innkeeper's wife had an idea. She showed them to the stable. While they were there Mary had her baby.

ALL: Where did the baby sleep?

READER 3: The baby slept in the manger. Now there were shepherds in the field watching over their sheep. Suddenly an angel appeared and the glory of God shone all around them.

ALL: Where the shepherds afraid?

READER 1: Yes. They were. But the angel said, "Do not be afraid. I bring good news of great joy. Today in Bethlehem a saviour has been born. You will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

ALL: And then what happened?

READER 1: Suddenly the sky was lit up with lots of angels. They sang praises to God.

ALL: What did the angels sing?

READER 2: They sang, "Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth."

READER 3: Glory to God in the highest.

ALL: Glory to God in the highest.

READER 1: Peace to God's people on earth.

ALL: Peace to God's people on earth.

READER 2: The shepherds were very excited and they said, "We must go at once!"

ALL: Where did the shepherds go?

READER 3: They went to visit the baby Jesus.

READER 1: Now far, far away there were three wise kings who heard about the birth of baby Jesus.

ALL: Did they also want to see the baby?

READER 2: Yes, they did. They travelled day and night, day and night, following the bright star.

ALL: Did they bring birthday gifts?



READER 3: They brought gifts of gold, frankincense and a myrrh.

ALL: Why did they choose these gifts?

READER 1: Gold is the sign for a king. Frankincense is the sign of a priest and myrrh is the sign of a promise.

READER 2: Today we remember how Jesus came into the world. He came to show us how much God loves us.

TEACHER: May God bless each and everyone and may you have a Merry Christmas.

- 2 **Arts and Crafts:** Complete the nativity scene that was started in LESSON 30, or use the pictures provided on the worksheet.  

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 3 The **animals in the stable** give their gifts. Read the following poem to the class. Explain the unfamiliar words.

Jesus our brother strong and good,
Was humbly born in a stable rude,
And the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus our brother strong and good.

"I," said the donkey shaggy and brown,
"I carried his mother up hill and down.
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town;
I," said the donkey shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow all white and red,
"I gave him my manger for his bed.
I gave him my hay to pillow his head;
I," said the cow all white and red.

"I," said the sheep with the curly horn,
"I gave him my wool for his blanket warm.
He wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I," said the sheep with the curly horn.

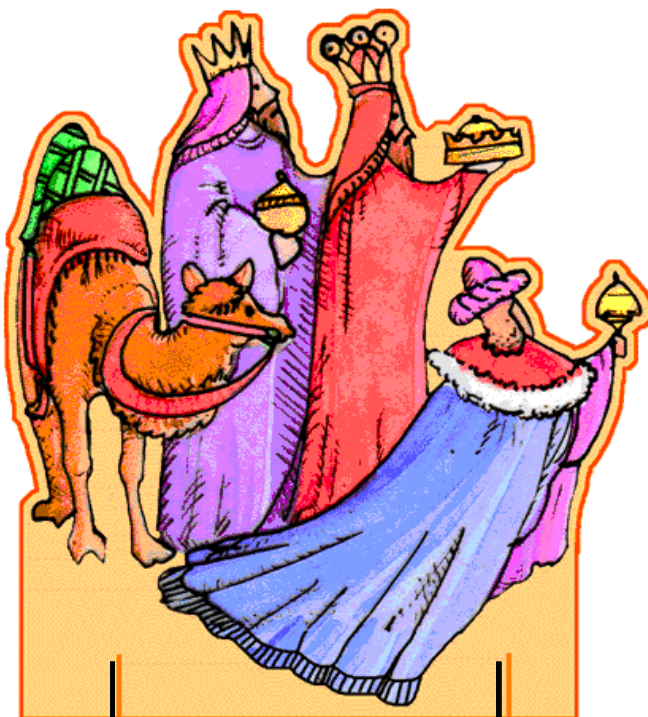
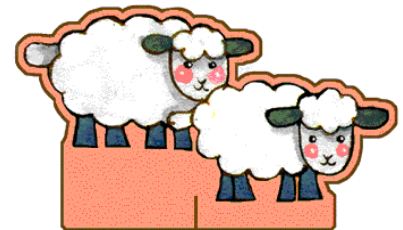
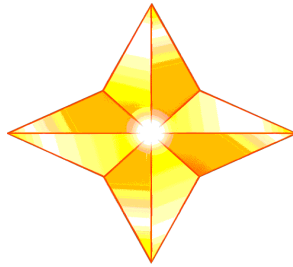
"I," said the dove from the rafters high,
"Cooed him to sleep, my mate and I.
We cooed him to sleep, my mate and I;
I," said the dove from the rafters high.

And every beast, by some good spell,
In the stable dark was glad to tell
Of the gift he gave Emmanuel,
The gift he gave Emmanuel.

(Author Unknown)



Nativity Scene



LESSON 32: The Child Jesus

AIM

To tell the story of Jesus' boyhood so that the children identify with him, and to give a little background to life in his time (8.4.4)

OUTCOME

Learners understand that Jesus lived through childhood just as they are doing.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Pictures or drawings to illustrate parts of your story (1)
- * TO REMEMBER (2) ⇒
- * Growth chart (4)
- * MATERIALS (5) ⇒
- * Paper and crayons (5)(6)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Since Jesus grew up in a Jewish home, this is a good opportunity to teach something about the Jewish faith. **Tell the following story** of Jesus, making it very interesting for the children. Have pictures to help in the story telling, or use chalk drawings. A good resource for suitable pictures is the Liturgical Calendar from the Catholic Bookshop in Cape Town. This calendar uses full-colour reproductions of art work found in South African churches.

WHEN JESUS WAS A CHILD

Mary and Joseph had to go to a town called Bethlehem. All the hotels in the town were full and they had to sleep in a stable. Then a wonderful thing happened: Jesus was born!

Almost immediately visitors started coming to see this special baby. The shepherds were very happy to find Baby Jesus. On their way home they told everyone they met about Jesus.

Joseph had a dream. God's angel told him that they were in danger because of the wicked King Herod.

Joseph jumped up and woke Mary. He said, "Mary, wake up. We must leave right away!"

They gave food and water to the donkey, wrapped Baby Jesus in a warm blanket and they set off right away. They did not slow down until they were in a safe place in the land of Egypt. They lived there until Jesus was a little boy.

Joseph had another dream. God's angel said to him, "It is safe to take Jesus home again. Joseph was so happy! Mary was so happy and Jesus was excited to be going home.

Jesus made many friends and they played lots of games together. Jesus learned about God from Mary and Joseph. He also prayed with his family. Jesus would help his mother at home and when he was a little older, Joseph taught him how to make beautiful things out of wood.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph did all the things that families do together. They celebrated special days with their families and friends. On Friday evenings they would have a special meal together. Mary would bless the candles before lighting them. Joseph would bless the bread and the wine and he would break the bread and share it with the family. Saturdays they would go to the synagogue to listen to God's word and to pray.

One day they went all the way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. A lot of people went together. The grown-ups walked together and often the children stayed together, talking and laughing and having fun on the way. When the celebration was over, everyone set off

home again. When they got home, Mary and Joseph saw that Jesus was not with them. They got very worried and they asked the neighbours if anyone had seen Jesus. No one knew where he was.

Mary and Joseph decided to walk back to Jerusalem, hoping to find Jesus on the way. But still they could not find him. They arrived in Jerusalem and they looked all over for Jesus. They asked the people they met if anyone knew anything about a lost boy. But no one had.

Finally they got back to the temple. There they found Jesus. He was sitting with the teachers, asking them questions and listening to everything they said. All the teachers were amazed at the clever things Jesus said.

Mary and Joseph could not believe their eyes. They told Jesus how worried they had been. Jesus went back home with them and the Bible says, "The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were upon him." [Luke 2:40]

(Rita Bull 1999)

- 2 Jesus would have said the following prayer, the 'Shema' every morning and every evening.

The Shema

Hear, O Israel;
the Lord is our God,
the Lord is One!
Blessed is his glorious kingdom
for ever and ever!
You shall love the Lord your God
with all your mind!
With all your strength,
with all your being.

Let the children **memorise** it, or the shorter version given below under TO REMEMBER

⇒

- 3 **Prayer:** Jesus we love you. Thank you for being our brother and our friend. Help us to love God's word as you did. Help us to learn and listen as you did.
- 4 Make a **growth chart**, marked in centimetres, which can be used to measure the height of each child. The heading could say "**Growing with Jesus**" Write out the verse Luke 2:40 as a reminder to the children that they are also growing in wisdom and stature.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 5 The children can **draw** simplified pictures of the type of house Jesus may have lived in, but then you will need to give a description. Some ideas are given below under **MATERIALS**
⇒ You could also consult *The Lion Encyclopaedia of the Bible* in the chapter, Home and Family Life.
- 6 The children could **draw and colour** a scene from the story.

MATERIALS

HOMES

Homes were built to stay cool. The poor had one roomed house built of mud bricks, with small, slit windows to keep people out, but to allow air to move through.

The rich had better building material. They built their houses upwards to have an upper room, or outwards to have one or more courtyards.

There was a flat roof on top of the house. This was used for storage, to sleep on during hot nights, for prayer, for shouting news to your neighbour, or for festivals and dancing. There was a ladder or stairs outside the house to get there.

Inside the house, the poor slept and sat on mats and used olive oil lamps. The rich had furniture, beds and many servants.

TO REMEMBER

You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. [Deuteronomy 6:5]