

Kids' Chronicle

Shepherds tending their flock hear the good news

By JOE SARNICOLA

After Joseph and Mary had traveled to Bethlehem for the census that had been ordered by Caesar Augustus, Mary gave birth to a son. They wrapped the boy in swaddling clothes and placed him in a manger, because the inns were full and there was nowhere else for them to stay.

At the same time there were shepherds who lived in the fields while they tended their sheep for the night watch. It was a quiet and peaceful night for the shepherds until a bright glow shone in the sky in front of them. Out of the light an angel appeared and the glory of the Lord filled the sky around the shepherds. The men were terrified.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord."

Immediately after the angel spoke, thousands of other angels appeared next to him. They praised God together saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." Then the angels returned to heaven.

Nothing like this had ever happened to the shepherds, but they knew a special child had been born, and they were chosen to be a part of his welcoming. One of them said to the others, "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

The shepherds left immediately and, as quickly as they could travel, they headed for Bethlehem, which was also called the city of David. They inquired about the birth of any new children and they found

Mary, Joseph and their newborn baby. The shepherds told Mary and Joseph what they had seen and heard. The other people who were there were amazed by the story of the shepherds. The shepherds returned to their homes, and they praised God, because they had seen everything as the angel had told them it would be.

Mary kept the visit of the shepherds committed in her heart. Wonders and miracles had already started to happen around this wonderful boy who had been sent by the Holy Spirit. And the child was named Jesus, as the angel told them.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Luke 2

Q&A

1. What frightened the shepherds?
2. Whom did the shepherds find in Bethlehem?

Bible Trivia

Joseph was the earthly father of Jesus. Who was Joseph's father?
(Hint: See Matthew 1)

Send answer to: Catholic Courier Bible Trivia, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Please include your name, address and school name. All entries must be received by Jan. 3, 2002. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted.

Bible Accent

As Catholics, we believe in one God who has shown himself to us as three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We call the union of these three persons the Holy Trinity. God the Father is loving, merciful and good. We honor him as the maker of heaven and earth. He created us as well. Jesus is God's son. He is the Messiah, the anointed savior who God promised would come to save the world. We call the miracle of the birth of Jesus his incarnation, which means he became human. He was also holy, because he was the Son of God. The Holy Spirit was sent by God to help us lead good Christian lives after Jesus had gone to heaven. The Holy Spirit was present at creation and also inspired the men and women who recorded the books of the Bible, which is God's word. The Bible tells us our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

St. Stephen

Stephen, whose name means "crown," was a Jew who spoke Greek. When the early apostles wanted seven men appointed to preach and pray and to supervise the operations of the churches, they looked for men who were "of good character and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom."

Stephen was one of the men who became the first deacons. Stephen was a gifted speaker, but those who were jealous of him and who did not like the message that he preached sought to ruin him. They found false witnesses and charged him with blasphemy. Stephen's defense is recorded in the Book of Acts. He was found guilty by his accusers and was sentenced to death. Even then, Stephen prayed for his enemies by saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." We honor him on Dec. 26.

Puzzle

Can you spell seven books of the Bible using only the letters from the following three words? Answers on page 11.

GOLD
FRANKINCENSE
MYRRH

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11:55 pm Christmas Proclamation

12:00 am Solemn Mass at Midnight

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Yon: *Gesu Bambino*; and more

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