

## Getting Started

### Introductions

*Set up circle and pocket chart.*

*Introduce Circlekeepers, Sacred Stories, and current theme.*

*ID groups; pass out bags with materials; participants make nametags.*

### Attendance

*Take attendance, greet participants, distribute bonus items as appropriate: folders and brochures to first-timers, certificate to four-timers, book to six-timers.*

### Explain the Talking Piece

**For some of the activities in Sacred Stories class we use a talking piece.**

**The talking piece creates a space in which everyone can speak and listen in peace.**

**Each person in the circle gets a chance to speak without being interrupted, and to listen without needing to respond.**

**When we are using a talking piece, here is how it works:**

- 1. The talking piece is passed around the circle from person to person.**
- 2. Only the person holding the talking piece may speak.**
- 3. It is always okay to pass; just say, "I pass."**

### Check-In Round

**Today our talking piece is: *Joseph, angel***

**We will use it for a check-in round; when the talking piece comes to you please...**

- 1. Say your name**
- 2. How familiar you are with this story (new, heard before, could tell)**
- 3. A word or more about how you are feeling today**

**I'll go first...**

### Agreements Round

**These are the four agreements for our time together:**

- 1. Honor the talking piece—when it is being used, speak only when you are holding it**
- 2. Speak from the heart—tell your truth as you are comfortable to share**
- 3. Listen from the heart—be attentive, with a positive spirit; avoid side conversations, comments or questions.**
- 4. Protect personal privacy—Tell about God, Jesus, this class and the story we learn, but keep confidential personal information that is shared**

**Now let us see if we can all accept these agreements: I accept these agreements...**

### Opening: The Presentation and the Story

*Present Journey to Bethlehem for **Week 3 of Advent (Joseph)**.*

*Tell **Matthew 1:18-25***

## Engaging the Story

### Familiarity

### Word I Heard

Listen again to **the story of the Annunciation to Joseph**.

**This time close your eyes or focus on the candle to help cut out distractions.**

**As you listen, notice if any word or phrase gets your attention... *Read or tell***

**Before you open your eyes, recall a word or phrase that got your attention...**

*Ring chime...* **Now open your eyes.**

**For this round, name a word or phrase that you heard in the reading/telling.**

### Storyboard → Tell to a Partner

### Structure of the Story

- **The first episode in this story is the crisis of Mary's conception and of Joseph's response.**
- **The second episode is the dream and the address of the angel to Joseph.**
- **The third episode is the prophecy--these are the words of Isaiah so you can give Isaiah in this episode a distinctive voice or gesture if you choose.**
- **And the fourth episode is the birth and the naming.**

### Name a Part

**For this round, pick one episode of the story to tell about—the one you found most interesting, meaningful, or that is your favorite illustration. Show us your storyboard if you like.**

### Verbal Threads

1. The name of Jesus –
  - a. Part 1—first sentence: "the birth of *Jesus*, the Messiah"
  - b. Part 2—the angel commands Joseph "you are to name him *Jesus*"
  - c. Part 4—the story ends with Joseph obeying: "and he named him *Jesus*"
  - d. Note part 3 has a naming feature: not *Jesus*, but *Emmanuel*
2. The child Mary has conceived is "from the Holy Spirit"—parts 1 and 2.

### Repeat-After-Me

### About the Story

*Read topics on About the Story handout—go around circle so each woman can read a paragraph; use talking piece for easy opt-out.*

*Show illustration of wedding feast and procession on pp. 12-13 of Everyday Life*

### Connections

*Each person has an opportunity to respond to possible connections between the story and their life experience.*

*Connection topics are named by the Circlekeeper (see handout for options).*

## **Winding Up**

### **Prayer Cards**

### **Collection**

*Gather all the items in the Circle and those passed out which need to be returned.*

### **Closing**

*Standing in the Circle, conclude with prayer and/or song such as “Go Now in Peace.”*