

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

by Christine Ferguson



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Through the Eyes of a Child

A Christmas PowerPoint Show

by Christine Ferguson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

For the Photographs:

Mary

Gabriel

Joseph

Caesar Augustus

Bystanders/Onlookers (*Any number*)

Clerk

Shepherds (*Any number*)

Angels (*Any number*)

Three Kings

For the Program:

Teacher

Child #1

Child #2

Child #3

Child #4

PowerPoint Projector Operator

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PRODUCTION NOTES

This program performance requires a PowerPoint projector and the advance preparation of digital photos which are to be projected on a screen or wall behind the actors as the presentation is being performed. The photos depict the Christmas story in a way that a child might imagine it, with the children themselves portraying the biblical characters. Only one adult and four children have speaking parts in the final performance, but the cast needed for the photos is flexible, since the number of angels or shepherds may be few or many. (An entire preschool Sunday school class, for example, may be used as the ANGELS.) Costumes may be as simple or elaborate as desired.

Costumes, Set and Props: *(For the photographs)* Appropriate robes for the biblical characters, a scroll, two suitcases, a car, a baby doll wrapped in swaddling clothes, a manger, hay, a star (may be made of foil-covered cardboard), gifts for the three Kings.

Costumes, Set and Props: *(For the play)* Biblical robes for Mary, Joseph, and two shepherds, five chairs, a manger, a baby doll wrapped in swaddling clothes, a Bible, a PowerPoint projector.

PHOTOGRAPH DESCRIPTIONS

The following photos may be taken weeks, or even months, in advance of the performance.

PHOTO #1: The Angel Gabriel Appears to Mary

Site: The living room of a contemporary home.

Action: GABRIEL's arm is extended, as if making a proclamation. MARY appears frightened.

PHOTO #2: Gabriel Comforts Mary

Site: Same as above.

Action: GABRIEL's hand is on MARY's shoulder. MARY is in awe, but she is not afraid.

PHOTO #3: Mary Reacts

Site: Anywhere, since this is a closeup of MARY's face.

Action: MARY's expression should depict her humble response to God's will.

PHOTO #4: Gabriel Appears to Joseph in a Dream

Site: A contemporary bedroom.

Action: JOSEPH is in bed, sleeping. The ANGEL stands nearby.

PHOTO #5: Joseph Reacts

Site: Anywhere, since this is a closeup of JOSEPH's face.

Action: JOSEPH's expression should portray surprise.

PHOTO #6: Caesar Augustus Decrees a Census

Site: The steps of an "official-looking" building, such as a city hall or library.

Action: CAESAR AUGUSTUS holds up a scroll, pointing to it, as BYSTANDERS look on.

PHOTO #7: Mary and Joseph Depart for Bethlehem

Site: A driveway.

Action: MARY and JOSEPH pack suitcases into the trunk of a car as ONLOOKERS wave good-bye.

PHOTO #8: The Walk to Bethlehem

Site: An open field.

Action: MARY and JOSEPH walk to Bethlehem. If possible, MARY could be riding a horse or donkey led by JOSEPH.

PHOTO #9: Mary and Joseph Search for Lodging

Site: A motel lobby. (Obtain the manager's permission ahead of time.)

Action: MARY and JOSEPH stand in front of a motel desk as the CLERK looks at them sternly.

PHOTO #10: No Room at the Inn

Site: The motel marquee showing "No Vacancy."

PHOTO #11: Jesus Is Born

Site: A barn, or as barn-like a setting as possible. The corner of a garage, with hay strewn about, is a possibility.

Action: MARY and JOSEPH kneel before a manger that contains the doll wrapped in swaddling clothes.

PHOTO #12: Shepherds Watch Their Flocks

Site: A sheep farm or petting zoo with lambs.

Action: SHEPHERDS tend their sheep. (An easy alternative is for the SHEPHERDS to simply stand in a field without showing their sheep. They may point or put a hand above their eyes as if "tending" unseen sheep.)

PHOTO #13: An Angel Appears to the Shepherds

Site: Same as above.

Action: The ANGEL stands before the SHEPHERDS with arms spread wide. The SHEPHERDS fall to the ground in fear.

PHOTO #14: A Multitude of Angels Visit

Site: Same as above.

Action: Several ANGELS stand grouped together with joyful expressions on their faces.

PHOTO #15: The Shepherds React to the Angels

Site: Same as above.

Action: The SHEPHERDS talk among themselves, pointing and gesturing with astonished faces.

PHOTO #16: The Shepherds Worship the Christ Child

Site: Same as Photo #11.

Action: The SHEPHERDS, in an attitude of worship, kneel or stand around MARY, JOSEPH and the baby in the manger.

PHOTO #17: We Three Kings

Site: An open field.

Action: The three KINGS, bearing gifts, travel to Bethlehem.

PHOTO #18: The Kings See the Star

Site: Same as above.

Action: The star hangs suspended, perhaps with fishing line, in front of the KINGS, who point to it joyfully.

PHOTO #19: The Kings Give Jesus Gifts

Site: Same as Photo #11.

Action: The three KINGS present their gifts to the baby Jesus as MARY and JOSEPH stand by.

The Presentation

(The POWERPOINT OPERATOR projects the proper photos at the places indicated in the script. The TEACHER enters carrying a Bible and stands at Center Stage to address the audience. The teacher's chair is at Center Stage, with two student chairs on either side. Costumes for Mary, Joseph, an angel and a shepherd and the manger with baby are hidden close by.)

TEACHER: It's Christmas time once again. In the stores, in the schools, in the church, and at home, holiday preparations stir us up into such a whirlwind of activity that it's sometimes difficult to catch our breath and reflect upon the very event we're celebrating — the birth of our Savior.

If we adults have trouble keeping Christ in Christmas, is it any wonder that our children get so caught up in the glitter and excitement that they forget about Jesus, too?

We need to remind them, and we need to remind ourselves, that God became a man and dwelt among us, and that he came as a tiny child.

Let's become children once again. Let's visit a Sunday school classroom and hear the Christmas story again. Let's see the miracle of Christmas through the eyes of a child. *(Four CHILDREN enter and sit on chairs. The TEACHER sits down on the center chair.)* Good morning, class!

CHILDREN: Good morning, Mr(s). _____! *(Insert his/her name.)*

TEACHER: Well, it's getting closer and closer to Christmas. Have you been doing anything to get ready?

CHILD #1: I made a list of everything I want: a scooter, a remote-controlled car, an electric train set ...

CHILD #2: *(Interrupting)* I'm going to be in a play at school,

- 1 and I get to be the Snow Princess!
- 2 **CHILD #3:** My mom's going to take me Christmas shopping!
- 3 **CHILD #4:** We're going to see the Festival of Lights! (*All the*
4 *CHILDREN start chattering excitedly about their plans. They*
5 *all talk at the same time.*)
- 6 **TEACHER:** OK, OK! I can see that you're all very busy with
7 holiday preparations. Today we're going to get ready
8 for Christmas, too. I'm going to read you a story.
- 9 **CHILD #2:** *Frosty the Snowman?*
- 10 **CHILD #1:** How about *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*?
- 11 **CHILD #4:** How about the poem, "'Twas the Night Before
12 Christmas"?
- 13 **CHILD #3:** Yes! I like that one!
- 14 **TEACHER:** No, none of those. My story is from the Bible —
15 the true story of what happened on the first Christmas.
16 The real Christmas story.
- 17 **CHILD #3:** (*Disappointed*) Oh, that story.
- 18 **CHILD #4:** (*In a bored manner*) Mary, Joseph, shepherds,
19 angels. That's old stuff.
- 20 **TEACHER:** Yes, it's an old story. What's wrong with that?
- 21 **CHILD #4:** Nothing, really. But we've heard it before. It just
22 isn't very exciting.
- 23 **CHILD #2:** It's kind of boring. (*All the CHILDREN nod and*
24 *murmur in agreement.*)
- 25 **TEACHER:** Maybe you've found it boring because you
26 haven't understood it before. You need to get into the
27 story.
- 28 **CHILD #1:** How do we do that?
- 29 **TEACHER:** Imagine you're there. Try to understand how
30 each person felt. Put yourselves in their places.
- 31 **CHILD #2:** Put ourselves in their places?
- 32 **TEACHER:** Yes. Use your imagination. Pretend you're a
33 part of the story and imagine what it would be like if
34 it happened to you. Do you think you can do that? (*The*
35 *CHILDREN nod, indicating that they can: "Yes," "We'll try,"*

1 *“Sure.”*

2 **TEACHER:** All right, then. *(Opens Bible.)* Imagine yourself in
3 the city of Nazareth, in the home of a young woman
4 named Mary. An angel is about to speak to her. Can
5 you visualize it? *(Photo #1, “The Angel Gabriel Appears to*
6 *Mary.”)*

7 **CHILD #4:** Yes ... yes, I can!

8 **CHILD #3:** I think I can see them!

9 **TEACHER:** *(Reading)* “In the sixth month, God sent the
10 angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin
11 pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a
12 descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The
13 angel went to her and said, ‘Greetings, you who are
14 highly favored! The Lord is with you.’

15 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and
16 wondered what kind of greeting this might be. *(Photo*
17 *#2, “Gabriel Comforts Mary.”)*

18 But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary,
19 you have found favor with God. You will be with child
20 and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the
21 name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son
22 of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the
23 throne of his father David, and he will reign over the
24 house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.’

25 ‘How will this be,’ Mary asked the angel, ‘since I am
26 a virgin?’

27 The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon
28 you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow
29 you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son
30 of God.’ *(Photo #3, “Mary Reacts.”)*

31 ‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May it be
32 to me as you have said.’ Then the angel left her” *(Luke*
33 *1:26-35, 38).*

34 **CHILD #1:** Wow! She must have been scared when that
35 angel appeared!

1 **CHILD #4:** But the angel brought good news, so she must
2 have been happy, too.

3 **CHILD #2:** But what about Joseph? (*Photo #4, "Gabriel*
4 *Appears to Joseph."*)

5 **TEACHER:** (*Reading*) "An angel of the Lord appeared to
6 [Joseph] in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do
7 not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because
8 what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She
9 will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the
10 name Jesus, because he will save his people from their
11 sins.' (*Photo #5, "Joseph Reacts."*)

12 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the
13 Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his
14 wife" (Matthew 1:20b-21,24).

15 **CHILD #2:** I think I know what happened next! They went
16 to Bethlehem.

17 **TEACHER:** Let's see if you're right. (*Photo #6, "Caesar*
18 *Augustus Decrees a Census."*) (*Reading*) "In those days
19 Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should
20 be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first
21 census that took place while Quirinius was governor of
22 Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register"
23 (Luke 2:1-3).

24 **CHILD #1:** So they packed up and went to Bethlehem, right?
25 (*Photo #7, "Mary and Joseph Depart for Bethlehem."*)

26 **CHILD #2:** Poor Mary! That's a lot of work for a pregnant
27 lady. She had to get their clothes ready and pack the car
28 ...

29 **CHILD #4:** Wait a minute! They didn't have cars back then,
30 did they? (*Photo #8, "The Walk to Bethlehem."*)

31 **TEACHER:** No, they didn't. Now, listen: (*Reading*) "So
32 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in
33 Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David,
34 because he belonged to the house and line of David. He
35 went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to

1 be married to him and was expecting a child” (Luke 2:4-
 2 5). And in Bethlehem, they found that there was no
 3 room for them at the inn. (*Photo #9, “Mary and Joseph*
 4 *Search for Lodging.”*)

5 **CHILD #3:** That part always makes me mad! (*The other*
 6 *CHILDREN agree.*) (*Photo #10, “No Room at the Inn.”*)

7 **CHILD #1:** They had to go to a crummy stable. I wouldn’t
 8 want to sleep with smelly animals!

9 **TEACHER:** But they had to. (*Photo #11, “Jesus Is Born.”*)
 10 (*Reading*) “While they were there, the time came for the
 11 baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a
 12 son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a
 13 manger, because there was no room for them in the
 14 inn” (Luke 2:6-7).

15 **CHILD #1:** There were shepherds there too, weren’t there?
 16 (*Photo #12, “Shepherds Watch Their Flocks.”*)

17 **TEACHER:** (*Reading*) “And there were shepherds living out
 18 in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at
 19 night. (*Photo #13, “An Angel Appears to the Shepherds.”*) An
 20 angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of
 21 the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
 22 But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring
 23 you good news of great joy that will be for all the
 24 people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been
 25 born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign
 26 to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and
 27 lying in a manger.’ (*Photo #14, “A Multitude of Angels*
 28 *Visits.”*) Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host
 29 appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
 30 ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men
 31 on whom his favor rests.’ (*Photo #15, “The Shepherds*
 32 *React to the Angels.”*)

33 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,
 34 the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let’s go to
 35 Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which

the Lord has told us about.’ (Photo #16, “*The Shepherds Worship the Christ Child.*”) So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told” (Luke 2:8–18, 20).

CHILD #2: When did the wise men come?

TEACHER: They came later. (Photo #17, “*We Three Kings.*”) (Reading) “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.’ (Photo #18, “*The Kings See the Star.*”) They went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. (Photo #19, “*The Kings Give Jesus Gifts.*”) On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:1–2, 9b-11). (TEACHER closes the Bible.)

CHILD #3: Is that the end of the story?

TEACHER: No. In a way, it’s just the beginning. The baby Jesus grew up to become a man, but a very special man, because he was God as well. He spent his time here on earth loving people, teaching them and healing them. And though he was God and had all the power of God, he let himself be put to death on the cross.

CHILD #4: I know why. It was for us—he took the



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