

Advent 2016

Waiting for a baby to be born

Armagh Diocesan Prayer and Spirituality Group

Cycle A

Introduction

Seasons Greetings from the Armagh Diocesan Prayer and Spirituality Group.

The Prayer and Spirituality Group organise prayer experiences and times of reflection for parish ministry groups as well as resourcing parishes with prayer and spirituality ideas and happenings. We organise Christian meditation groups and spiritual retreats. If you go to www.prayerandspirituality.com you will find a more detailed description of our work and tasks to date.

This Advent booklet is for the younger members of the Diocese (Post Holy Communion) and contains items based on the Advent Gospels and Readings, Christmas Day, The Holy Family and The Epiphany of the Lord (Cycle A).

The general theme is based on the idea of Waiting.

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We have tried to write these with children in mind and have included opportunities for literacy, art and problem solving. This booklet encourages children to question aspects of the Advent readings and is an ideal opportunity for parents, grandparents, brothers or sisters to help out.

The idea is to let children participate in the Christmas Season and begin to link their ideas of Christmas with those of the Church (Advent Wreath, Giving, Love etc).

Colouring pencils would be better to use than markers as they will not go through to the next page!



The word Advent means "Coming" and the season of Advent is a time when we WAIT for the COMING of a special baby - JESUS !

To help count up the weeks to Christmas, people light a candle each Sunday in Advent and place it in a circle of evergreen branches. Each candle lit is a sign of HOPE and a reminder of good things to come.

The branches are evergreen showing us that God loves us always and are in the shape of a circle to remind us that his love has no end.

There are three purple candles lit; the first on week one, the next on week two and the third on week four. Purple was an expensive dye in old times and a sign of Royalty; these show us that someone very important is coming - "Christ the King".

Advent in the past was like Lent; people would have eaten less and prayed more to prepare for Christmas. The pink candle is lit on the third week (Gaudete Sunday) as a sign of Joy. People could break their fast for the day (like St Patrick's Day). On this day the priest would wear rose or pink coloured clothes and everyone would be a little happier.

At the Christmas Eve Mass the pink and all the purple candles are lit as we arrive in Mass and only then is the final central white candle lit. This candle shows us that Jesus is with us.

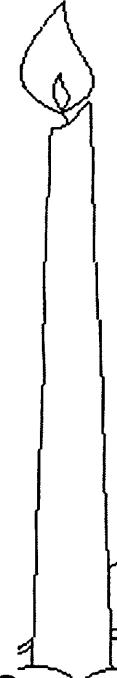
As a sign of our waiting we will colour the candles in our booklet the same as the Advent Wreath in Church.

1st Sunday of Advent

(Light our first advent candle by Colouring in the flame yellow and the candle purple - watch the priest do the same at mass. Why does he do this? Ask someone about the Advent Wreath!)

The 1st Sunday of Advent (Cycle A) Gospel comes from "Matthew 24:37-44"

Find out what this means and what the numbers are, because you will come across this "Code" every week!



Jesus says this in today's Gospel.

"Stay awake for you do not know when the master is coming!"

It is Christmas morning! Filled with excitement you open the living room door and there in front of you is a room filled with presents, loads of decorations and a huge tree lit with hundreds of colourful lights.

Write 3 adjectives that sum up how you would feel.

1.....

2.....

3.....

Write down 3 things that would make Jesus feel like this when he comes to see you.

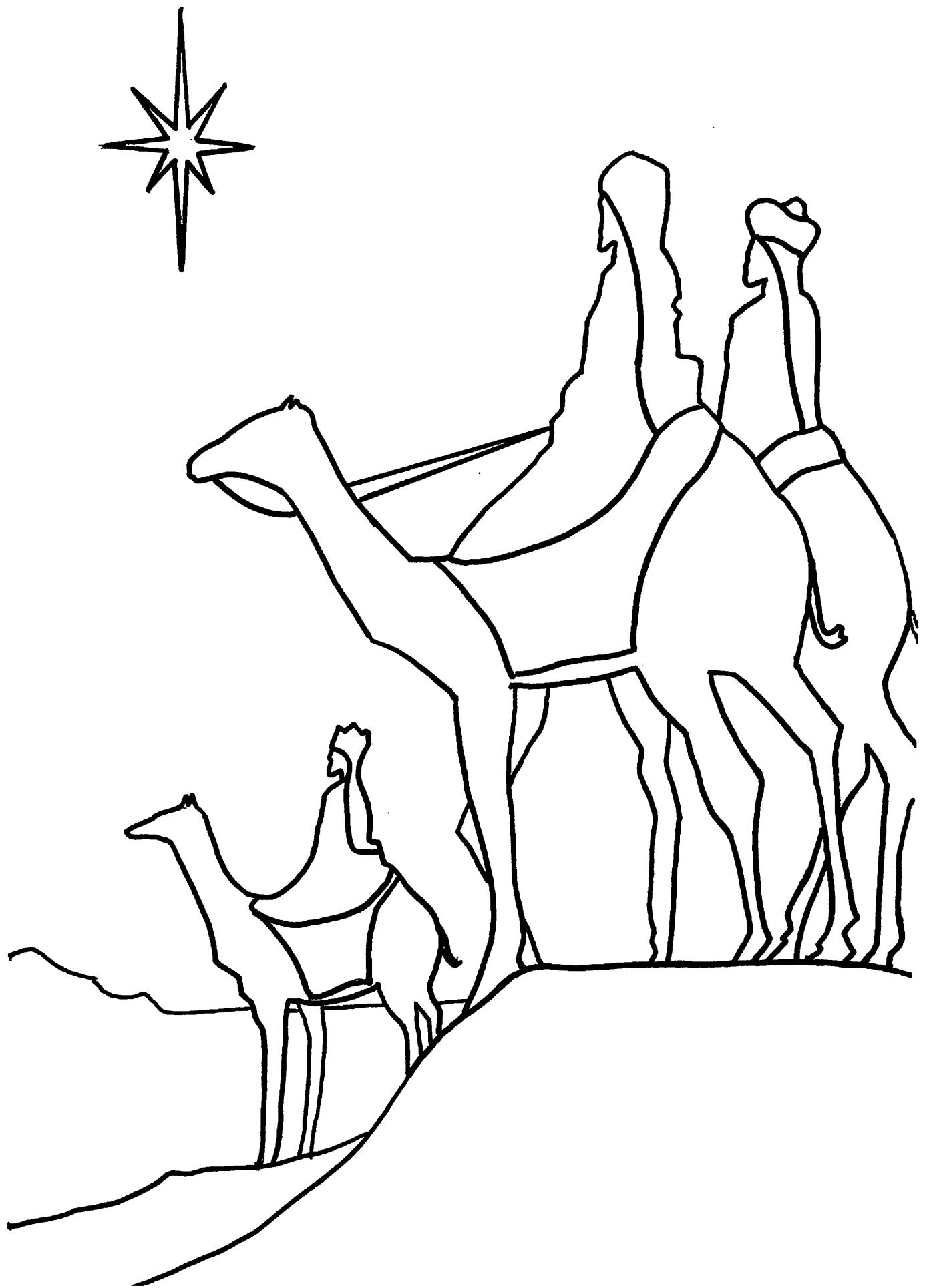
1.....

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2.....

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3.....

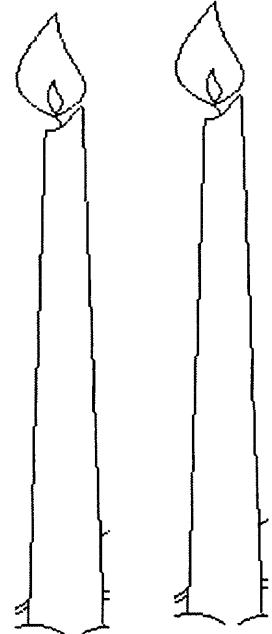


2nd Sunday of Advent

(Light our first and second advent candles
by colouring in the flames yellow and the candles
purple)

In today's Gospel - "Matthew 3:1-2"

John the Baptist says-



"Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths
straight."

How can we do this? John says to "Repent".

Find out what it means for us to repent :

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WORD SEARCH

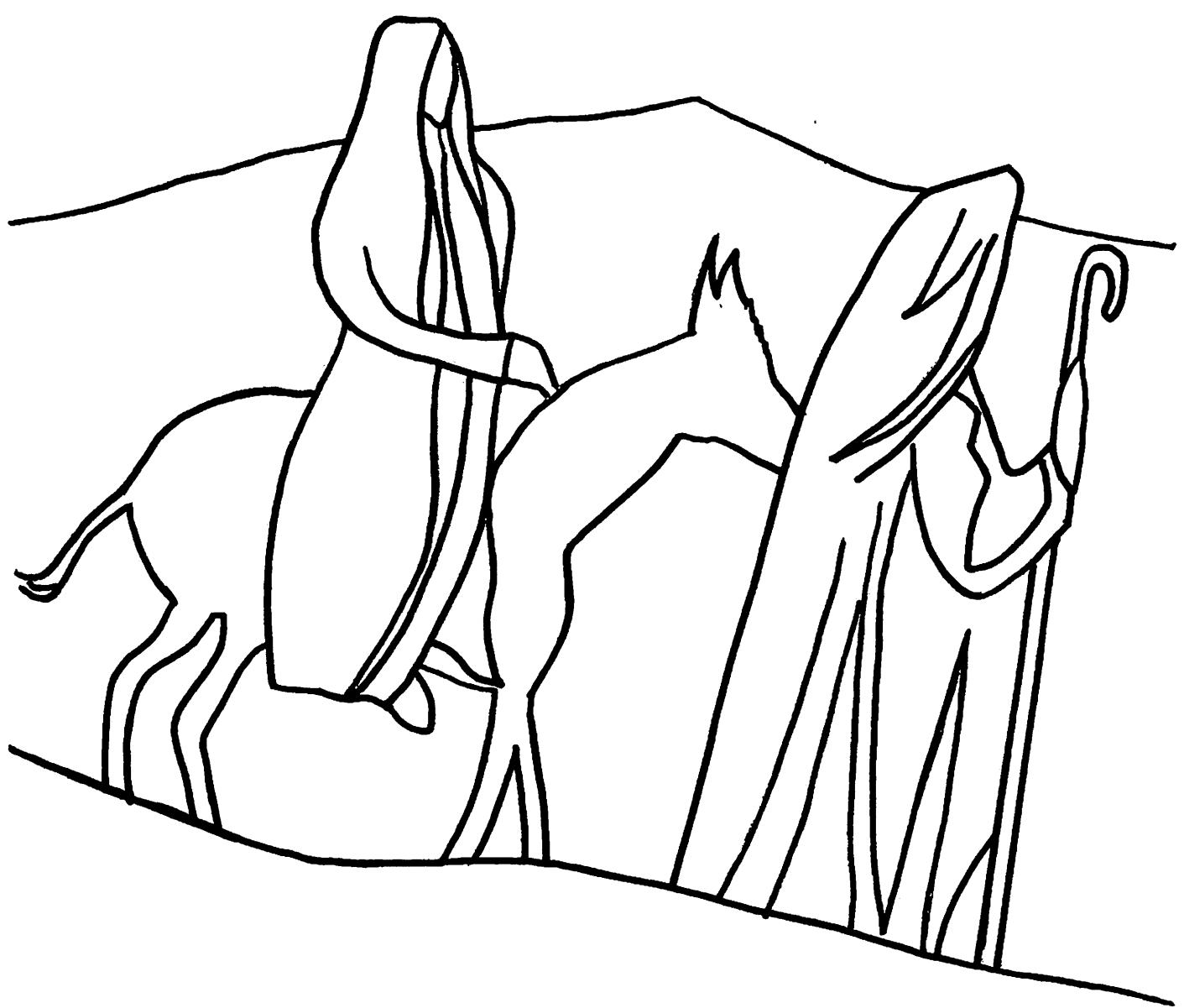
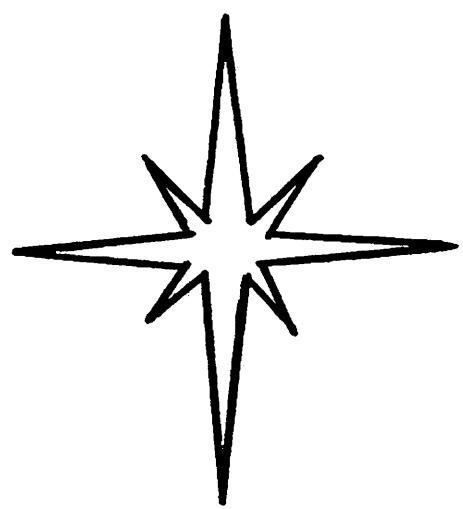
Find the words and finish the sentence using some of the words.

GOD
JESUS
LOVE
HEART
SOUL
MIND
NEIGHBOUR
JOHN
BAPTIST

D	Y	G	I	T	R	J	X	C	G
N	O	T	G	O	D	M	E	F	G
H	E	S	U	S	R	I	L	L	R
E	X	I	Y	X	B	N	S	O	U
A	S	T	G	E	L	D	U	V	O
R	O	P	N	H	N	Q	S	E	E
T	U	A	D	H	B	J	E	V	P
G	L	B	T	N	O	O	J	B	T
R	L	P	W	F	Q	J	U	R	V
O	R	L	K	L	R	I	L	R	W

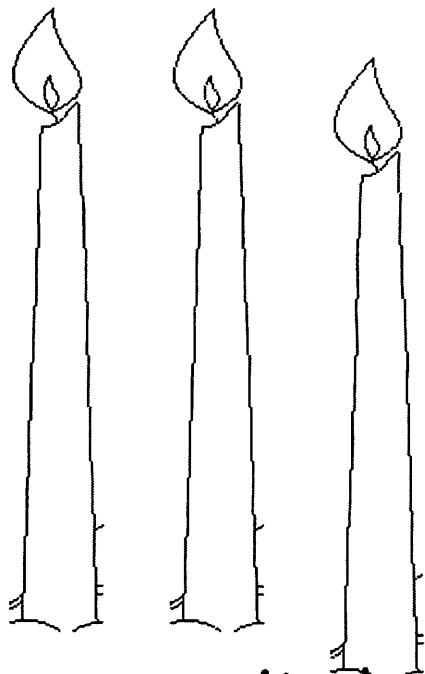
LOVE ___ WITH ALL YOUR ___ , SOUL AND ___
AND LOVE YOUR ___ AS YOURSELF.

Can you see what the 1st and 2nd weeks Gospels are asking of you? Have another look - Week 1 is saying - Stay awake, be on your guard and Week 2 says prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Jesus is coming!!



3rd Sunday of Advent

(Light our first and second advent candles by colouring-in the flames yellow and the candles purple. Colour the third advent candle a happy colour - pink and colour the flame yellow)



Read "Matthew 11:2-11"

Just like you, John the Baptist was so excited at the coming of Jesus. He asked Jesus was he the one who was to come and save us? Jesus said yes - "For I make the blind see, the lame walk and the deaf hear".

Maybe this week we can do the work for Jesus. For example: Give a gift to St Vincent De Paul at Mass. This will help people who need it and will make them happy!



4th Sunday of Advent

(Light all of our advent candles by colouring-in all four flames yellow and three candles purple and one candle pink).

Read "Matthew 1:18-25". It is all about people saying YES to God. Mary said YES and became Jesus' mum. Joseph said YES and took Mary to a safe place.

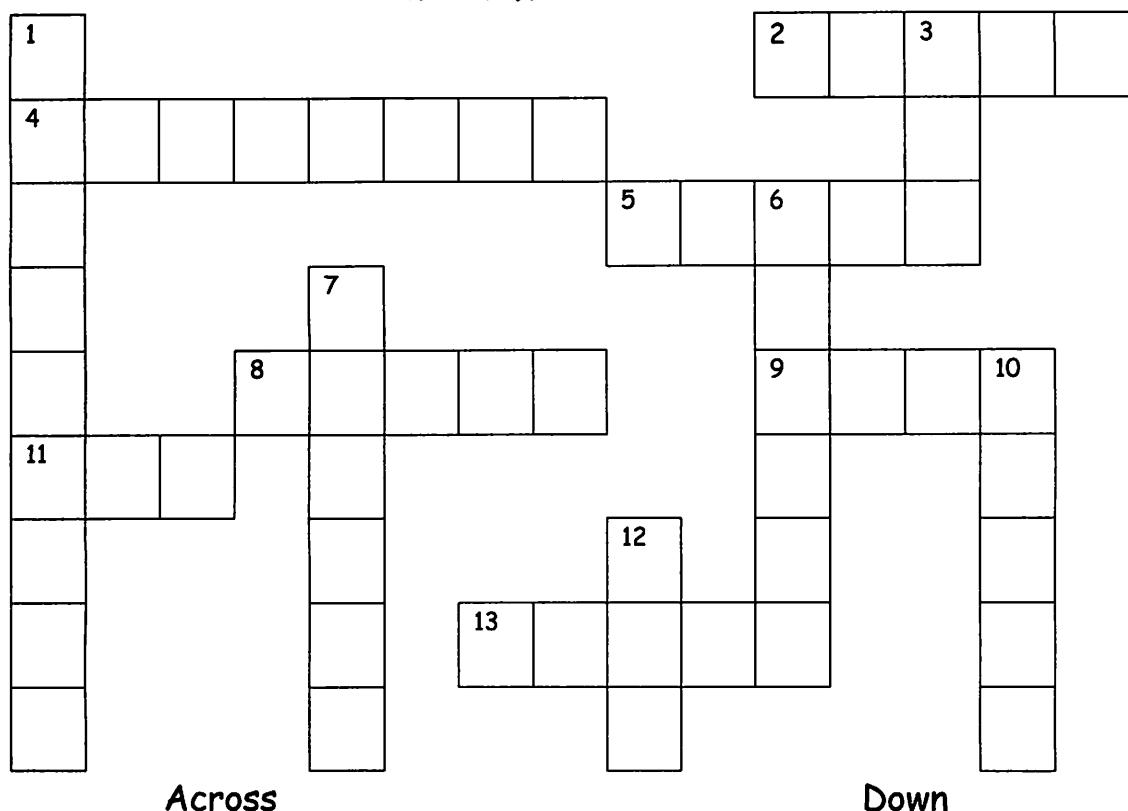
How are you saying YES?

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Christmas Crossword

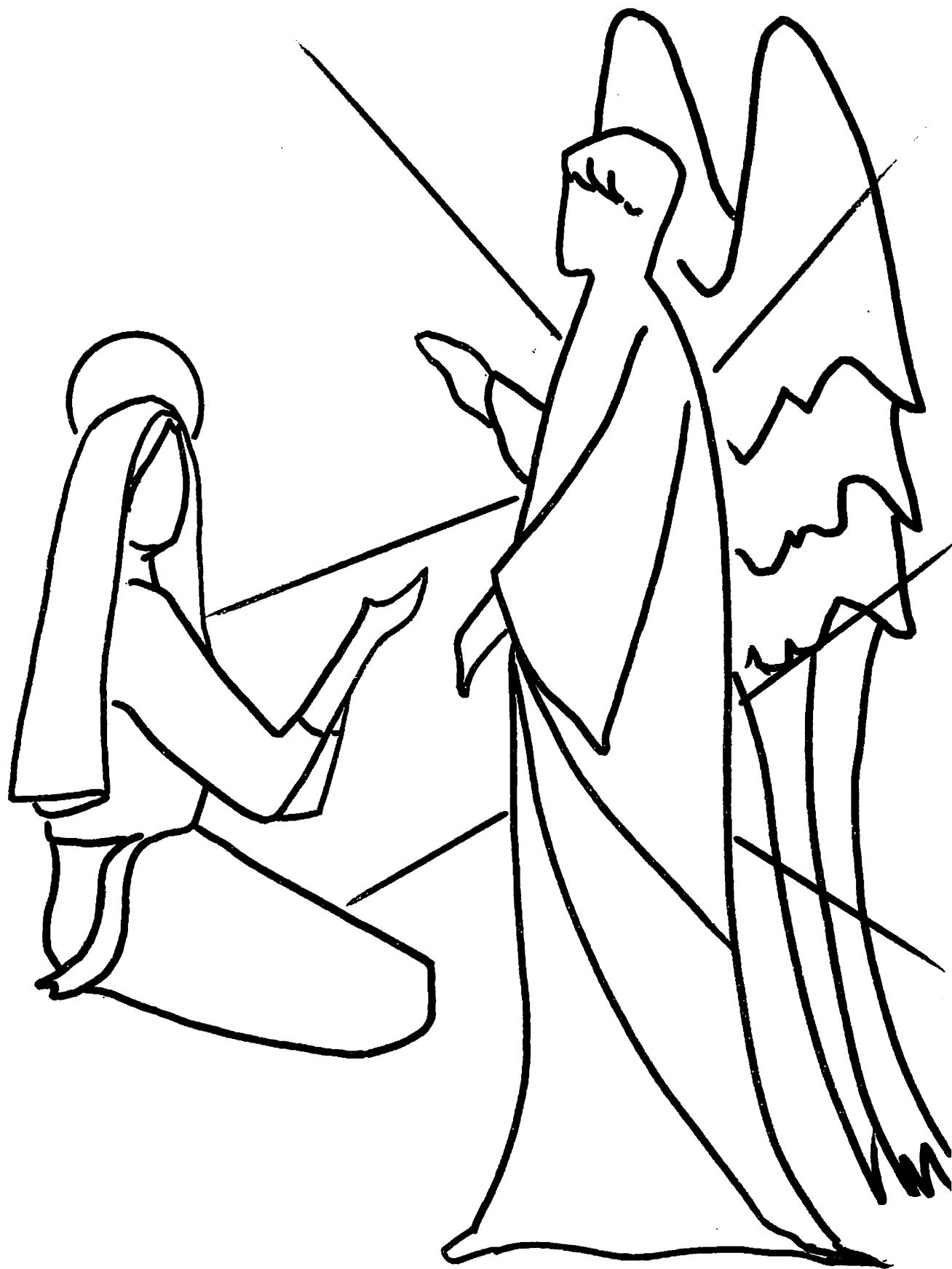


Across

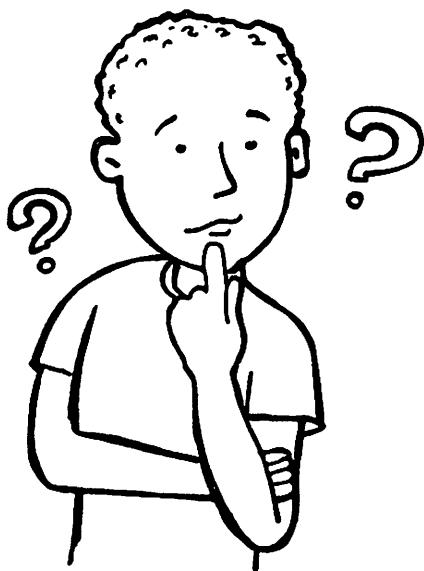
Down

2. Have a _____ Christmas! (5)
4. Name that means God-is-with-us (8)
5. One of Santa's Reindeers (5)
8. Santa's Workshop is at the ___ Pole (5)
9. Unable to walk properly (4)
11. Noah built this (3)
13. Not asleep (5)

1. Main city in Israel
3. Colour of Rudolph's Nose (3)
6. Where a King and Queen Live (6)
7. Insect John the Baptist ate (6)
10. Santa's little helpers (5)
12. Meat we eat with Turkey at Christmas (3)



Let's recap on the events of Advent:



1st Week of Advent - Stay Awake

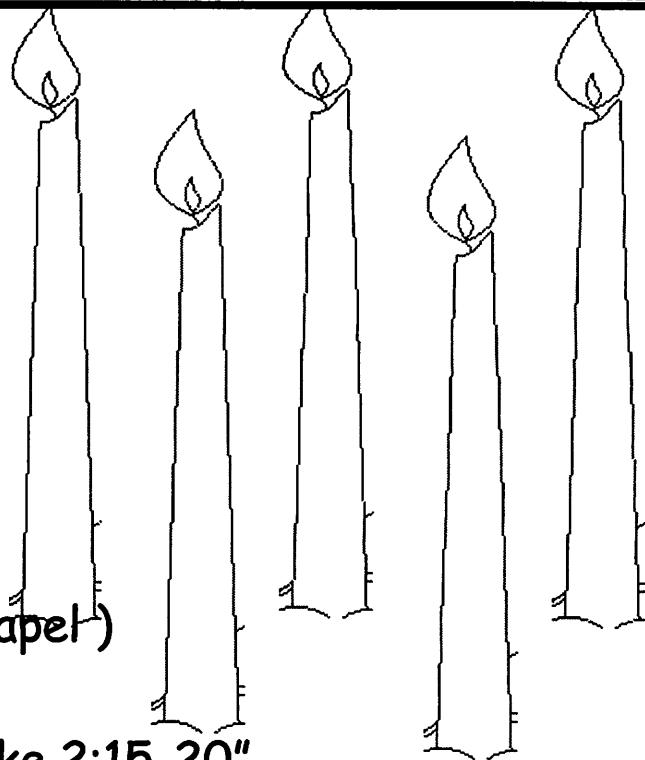
2nd Week of Advent - Stay awake and prepare for Jesus; make his paths straight.

3rd Week of Advent - Stay awake and prepare for Jesus; make his paths straight and do not lose faith.

4th Week of Advent - Stay awake and prepare for Jesus; make his paths straight and do not lose faith. Be willing to say YES to Jesus.

Christmas Day

(At last - Happy Christmas !
Colour in the 4 outside candles
like last week and leave the
middle candle white with a
yellow flame. Your candles
are the same as those in the chapel)



Read the Dawn Mass Gospel "Luke 2:15-20".

The shepherds went to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus lying in the manger.

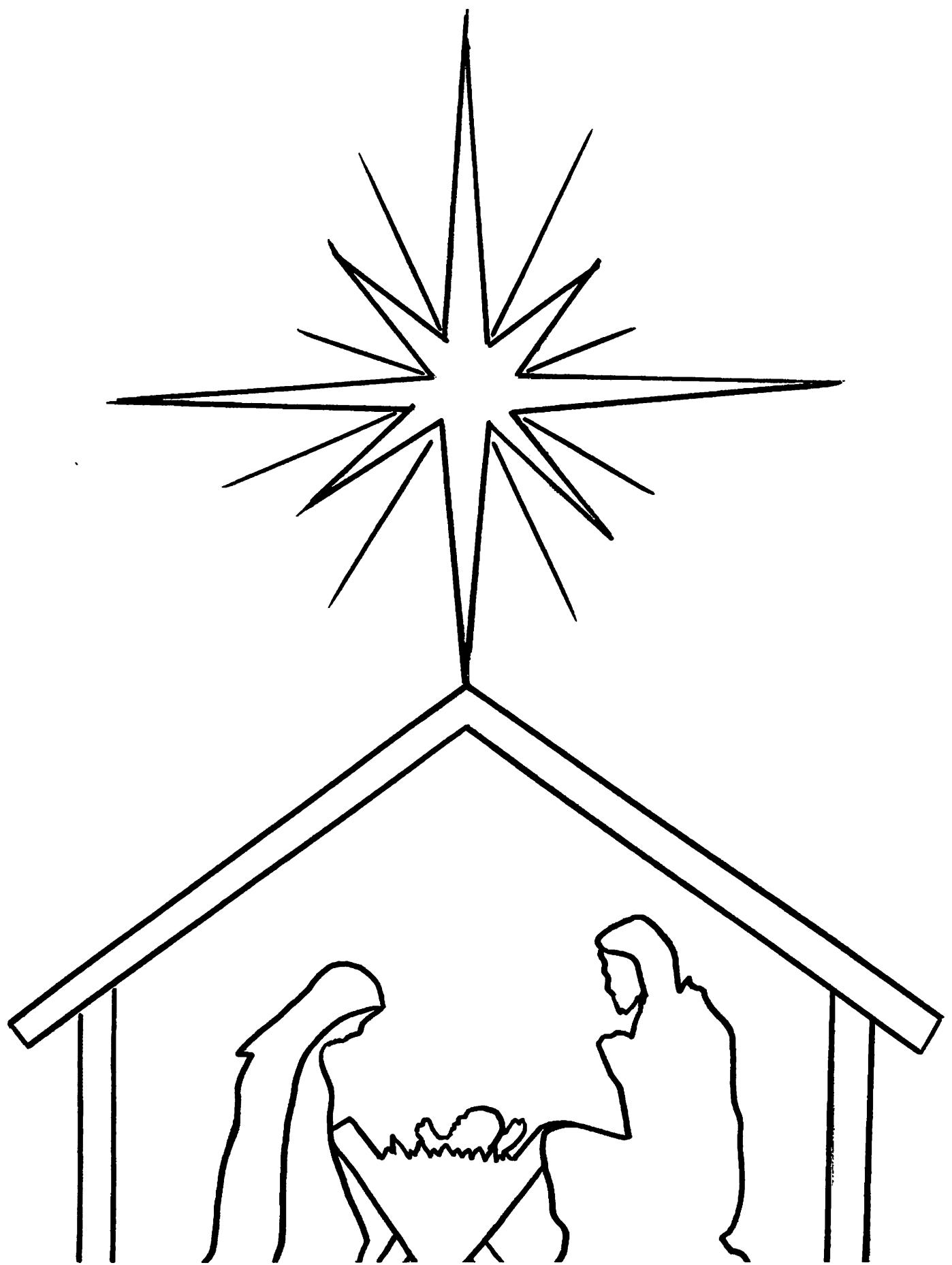
The Angel appeared to the Shepherds and told them to go and find Mary and Joseph with baby Jesus.

The Shepherds said YES - just like Mary, Joseph and John and were astounded by what they found.

Look at the other readings in the Dawn Mass and write down some things from the readings that you might discover if you say Yes to Jesus.

Example: From the Responsorial Psalm - JOY

.....
.....
.....
.....



Draw a Christmas picture using words and symbols which you have come across in this booklet.

Holy Family

Read the Gospel for the Feast day -

“Matthew 2:13-15. 19-23”

People say that the Holy Family is the perfect family; the perfect example for all families to follow.

Why do you think they say this?

Make a list of all the bad things that happened to Jesus, Mary and Joseph

The Holy Family were perfect because they were always willing to say YES to God!

The Epiphany of The Lord

Epiphany is a word that simply means "to let know".

Read the Gospel from "Matthew 2:1-12".

You are a reporter for the local Newspaper in Judea. Write a story for the paper, with a main headline, an account and picture based on the story from Matthews' Gospel.



