**The Joyful Mysteries**

**The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)**

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel’s message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, “Don’t be afraid, Mary. God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!”

Mary said to the angel, “I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God’s power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary; “may it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.”

**The Visitation (Luke 1:39-45)**

Soon afterward Mary got ready and hurried off to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said in a loud voice, “You are the most blessed of all women and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord’s mother comes to visit me? For as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby within me jumped with gladness. How happy you are to believe that the Lord’s message to you will come true!”

**The Nativity (Luke 2:1-7)**

At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When the first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown.

Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, and while they were in Bethlehem, the time cane for her to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger – there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

**The Presentation (Luke 2:22-35)**

The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification, as the Law of Moses, commanded. S they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the Law of the Lord: “Every first-born male is to be dedicated to the Lord.” They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.

At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s promised Messiah. Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple. When his parents brought the child Jesus into the temple to do for him what the Law required, Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:

“Now, Lord, you have kept your promise, and you may let your servant go in peace.

With my own eyes I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples;

A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles and bring glory to your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, “This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart.”

**The Finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-50)**

Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the festival as usual. When the festival was over, they started back home, but the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this; they thought that he was with the group, so they travelled a whole day and then started looking for him among their relatives and friends. They did not find him, so they went back to Jerusalem looking for him. On the third day they found him in the Temple, sitting with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his intelligent answers. His parents were astonished when they saw him, and his mother said to him, “Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you.”

He answered them, “Why did you have to look for me? Didn’t you know that I had to be in my Father’s house? But they did not understand his answer.

