

THE JOURNEY

By Lynda Pujado

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Here is a play which shows the Christmas story is really a story of people on a journey. Mary and Joseph and the Wise men traveled long, difficult distances physically, but more importantly are their personal journeys. They, along with the shepherds of the field and even a messenger in King Herod's court face danger, consuming doubt, and sometimes frightening emptiness. For some of them it's a journey into the unknown. Yet each one finds - and follows - a path to the King of Eternity. Their journeys beckon us to follow.

CHARACTERS

(8 m, 8 w)

GABRIEL: Announces the news to Mary and shepherds.

MARY: Faces frightening events but ever faithful.

ELIZABETH: Tells Mary to trust God.

WOMAN 1: Curious woman of the village.

WOMAN 2: Another.

JOSEPH: Doubtful, then defends Mary.

WISE MAN 1: On a long, lonely journey.

WISE MAN 2: Another.

SHEPHERD 1: Is told the news of the birth.

SHEPHERD 2: Another.

SHEPHERD 3: Another.

ANGEL 1: Announces the news.

ANGEL 2: Another.

ANGEL 3: Another

KING HEROD: Threatened by the birth.

MESSENGER: Starts his own personal journey.

(NOTE: GABRIEL and the ANGELS may be male or female depending cast needs.)

PLAYING TIME: Playing time about 35 minutes, depending upon if songs are used at the nativity.

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SYNOPSIS

- Scene 1** Mary in Nazareth, then at Elizabeth's.
Scene 2 Village women discuss Mary.
Scene 3 Joseph and Mary at the village well.
Scene 4 Wise Men, Joseph and Mary, and
Shepherds travel to Bethlehem.
Scene 5 At the stable.
Scene 6 In Herod's court.
Scene 7 Joseph and Mary leave for Egypt.

SETTING

Although there are 7 scenes, all settings are simply suggested as a well for the Nazareth settings, a stable in Bethlehem, a royal chair for King Herod's court.

PROPS

Water jugs for Mary and village women; sewing for Elizabeth; simple telescopes, packs of supplies, and gifts for the Baby for Wise Men; lighted candles for Angels; wrapped doll for Mary; pack of supplies for Joseph.

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SCENE 1

(BEFORE CURTAIN: MARY enters SL with a water jug, on her way to a well. GABRIEL the angel enters SR.)

GABRIEL: Woman of Nazareth.

MARY: *(Turns and immediately shields HER face.)* Oh, I am afraid!

GABRIEL: I am the angel Gabriel with a message from your father in Heaven.

MARY: Please, you frighten me!

GABRIEL: You will bear the Messiah and call him Jesus. You are God's choice to do this task.

MARY: *(Looking up in surprise.)* What? I am only a young girl from Nazareth. I am not important.

GABRIEL: God knows your heart, Mary. He chooses you. Jesus will be King eternal, the long awaited Messiah for the Jews and all the earth. He will come to take away the sins of the world. Do not fear, Mary.

MARY: I want to do the will of the Lord, but, I am not good enough!

GABRIEL: Remember that nothing is impossible with God. You must trust God, Mary. He respects you and loves you. Even your cousin Elizabeth will have a child in her old age. Nothing is impossible with God. *(Exits silently.)*

MARY: *(To the audience.)* How can I do this? I am unmarried. How can I tell Joseph? I want to do what God wants, but how? *(Thinking to HERSELF.)* Elizabeth. I must confide in her. I will go to her in the hill country. *(SHE quickly exits.)*

(CURTAIN opens. AT RISE: ELIZABETH, pregnant, is seated sewing and MARY is sitting at her feet.)

MARY: Is it true, Elizabeth, at your age?

ELIZABETH: It is. I am to have a child named John, the forerunner of the Christ. You will be a woman famous for the mother of our Lord. It is an awesome responsibility. You will be a model mother for all women, Mary.

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MARY: (*Stands, pacing in anguish.*) But I have so many problems. I am so poor, Elizabeth! Who can be more common and unimportant than I am? I am only an obscure girl from Nazareth. How can I tell Joseph? He will be so hurt, and my life will be in danger ... I ... I might be stoned by the village people. What should I do, Elizabeth? Who can help me?

ELIZABETH: Trust God, Mary. You are in His hands. He can do anything, remember that. You are to bear God's son.

MARY: I trust God, Elizabeth, but I still feel so alone in this responsibility, and so overwhelmed.

ELIZABETH: Yes, child. But, God wouldn't have given you this task if he felt you couldn't handle it. He has the strength you need, and will see that your needs are met. Go back to Nazareth. Face the people. Face Joseph and do not deny the truth about yourself.

MARY: You are right, Elizabeth. I want to trust God and do what is right, but it doesn't seem very easy right now! (*SHE sits at ELIZABETH'S feet again and the older woman comforts her. LIGHTS out.*)

SCENE 2

(*AT RISE: It is several months later. Two VILLAGE WOMEN coming to the well CS, enter SL discussing Mary. They talk as they draw water.*)

WOMAN 1: You know, we could stone her for this! The penalty for unwed pregnancy is death by stoning.

WOMAN 2: That's right. I don't understand it, really. Yesterday down in the village they said Mary was pregnant. She's not the type. (*Shakes HER head.*) She's respectable - has good parents, a good home. By the way, isn't she supposed to be engaged or something?

WOMAN 1: That's right, it's Joseph the carpenter. I wonder if he knows. I don't think he does. He's not the type, either, to be involved in a scandal like this.

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WOMAN 2: No, he's quiet, reserved and decent. It doesn't seem right, though. It doesn't add up. It's strange.

WOMAN 1: Well, I guess we are just naive. Things are never what they seem to be. You never can tell about some people, no matter what they appear to be on the outside.

WOMAN 2: You're right. Nevertheless, Mary faces death if the village decides it. By stoning! She's so young, too. I wonder why she would do it, throw everything away that she had to look forward to and risk everything. Now, she's got nothing. She'll be lucky if she gets away with her life from here.

WOMAN 1: (*Shaking HER head.*) She'll be lucky if she gets away with her life from here. (*THEY exit SL. LIGHTS out.*)

SCENE 3

(*AT RISE: JOSEPH and MARY enter SR and walk to the well CS.*)

JOSEPH: Mary, please, I must talk to you. (*MARY stops, looks down.*) There has been talk in the village. It was about you. (*Emotionally.*) I can't, and won't believe it, Mary. We've known each other for so long. It can't be about you. Mary, tell me it isn't true. There couldn't be a more honest and respectable young girl in all of Nazareth.

MARY: (*Quietly.*) It is true, Joseph. I am going to have a baby.

JOSEPH: (*Shocked.*) So, it is true! This is unbelievable!

MARY: An angel of the Lord came to me. I am to bear God's son, Jesus. He will reign for all eternity.

JOSEPH: (*Stunned.*) I ... I will not harm you, Mary. I will divorce you quietly. It will be just between the two of us.

MARY: It is God's son! Our relationship has not changed, Joseph.

End of Freeview

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