



**Day of Scripture:
Scripture for Children
Friday 19 June 2020**

Welcome Lucy

Today we are going to be listening to a story from the Bible. We are always listening, even as we are reading the Bible as grown-ups. We're still always listening for the voice of God, who speaks to us through the Scripture. Now, in order to listen, we need to do something; we need to make something, and that something is silence. We need to have it quiet—quiet around us and quiet inside us, so that we can listen very carefully to what God is saying to us in the Scripture.

You can make silence by moving more slowly and more quietly, taking our time, being quiet, turning off the TV, being very, very still. When we are quiet and still, we are ready to listen.

The Scripture tells us about Jesus, and invites us into the story. We are always listening for that invitation into the story. Today we are going to listen to something that happened in the Gospel, but it happened before Jesus was born. You may remember the story about what happened to Mary, when the angel Gabriel came to visit her. Do you remember, Lucy, what happened to Mary when the angel Gabriel came to visit her? He said something to her, didn't he? He said that she was going to have a baby. She was very puzzled. How can this be so? Because she was a virgin. Do you remember what the angel Gabriel said?

The angel Gabriel told her that the Spirit of the most high would overshadow her, and that was how she would come to have this special child. The angel told Mary something else as well, something about her kinswoman, Elizabeth. Do you remember?

Elizabeth was going to have a baby as well. This was very surprising. Do you remember why it was surprising? It was surprising because she was too old to have a baby. The angel told Mary nothing is impossible with God.

When we listened to this story together, we wondered what Mary might have done when the angel left her. Scripture doesn't tell us what happened when the angel left Mary, not immediately, but it does tell us something that happened very soon after. Today, we are going to listen to what happened very soon after, when Mary went to visit Elizabeth.

We are going to light a candle, because we are reading from the Gospel. The candle reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world. This story is from Luke's Gospel (Luke 1.)
Listen to what happened when Mary arrived at Elizabeth's house.

Luke 1...

What did you hear? Did you notice that Elizabeth knew the good news before Mary told her? How did she know the good news? I wonder. Something happened. The baby in her womb leapt for joy. Now her baby will be John the Baptist, a person who knows and loves Jesus even before he was



born. When John leapt in Elizabeth's womb, Scripture says that she was filled with the Holy Spirit. I wonder who told John and Elizabeth about Jesus. Do you think it could have been the Holy Spirit?

Then Elizabeth says something. She says these words are part of an important prayer in the Church, one we say every Sunday. The Hail Mary. The words of Scripture make their way into our prayers and the life of the church.

Does Elizabeth seem pleased? Yes, she does, doesn't she? She is pleased because, like Mary and like you, she knew the words of the prophets, the ones who promised this child. In Advent we hear lots of these prophecies about Jesus. *'To us a child is born, to us a son is given'*; these are the promises that were made. Elizabeth remembered them, Mary remembered them, and we remember them. Elizabeth is waiting for this promised child, just like we wait during Advent, when we look forward to Jesus' return and prepare to welcome the light into our lives.

When Elizabeth recognizes that Mary is carrying Jesus, the promised one, she thanks God. She feels blessed. She asks, *'who am I?'*

Mary is happy, too. She prays a beautiful prayer of praise to God. Let's listen to those words again.

Those words are also part of an important prayer in the Church, the Magnificat. When we pray these words, we are invited to share in Mary's joy.

How do we feel when we recognize that Jesus is close to us, when we know in our hearts that he is present, he is close to us? Joyful? Peaceful? When we know in our hearts—like Mary and Elizabeth knew—that Jesus is close to us, we feel peaceful, joyful. Mary and Elizabeth's response was to pray, to praise God, to rejoice.

Perhaps we can pray Mary's words together, or say our own prayer or sing a song.

We might thank God for sending the light into the world.

Now that we have finished this part of our listening, we are going to extinguish the candle and restore the materials.

Although you won't be able to work with these materials at home, you can continue to reflect on the words that we have heard' you can continue to listen for the voice of God. You might read this passage from the gospel or have a grownup read it to you. You might do some drawing as you think about Mary's words and Elizabeth's words and the exciting things that happened.

If you liked these materials, and you would like to know more, Canon Jackson can put you in touch with me, or you can visit the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd website: www.cgsuk.org