

Maronite Nativity Pageant

*** Director notes assume the pageant takes place inside the Church. See the diagram at the end to help understand placement inside the Church.*

Director notes: The pageant begins with the Narrator standing at the left podium. Mary is kneeling, facing toward the audience, in the middle of the Sanctuary. Angel Gabriel is at the right podium and the angel choir is on the right side of the sanctuary. Joseph is sitting in the front pew, ready for Scene 2.

Narrator: Welcome to our parish's Christmas Nativity pageant where we will retell the story of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Scene 1 – Mary is kneeling down and praying when the Angel Gabriel appears before her.

Hymn #1: Your Announcement this Day, O Lord.

Syriac: ehnono noohro shareero

Your announcement this day, O Lord,
makes the universe rejoice.
Hear the Church and her children sing
praises as they shout with joy.
For today a messenger,
sent down from the Father's house,
brings the Virgin joyful news:
"Christ will dawn from your pure womb.
Adam's children he will save."

Narrator: God sent his angel, Gabriel, to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph who was a descendant of King David. The girl's name was Mary. The angel came to her and said:

Gabriel: Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!

Narrator: Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her:

Gabriel: Do not be afraid. God has chosen you to give birth to His Son and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and his kingdom will never end.

Mary: How can this be?

Gabriel: The Holy Spirit will come upon you.

Mary: I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said.

Director notes: As Hymn #2 is sung, Mary gets up and walks to the left of the left-side podium, facing out toward the audience.



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Hymn #2

Syriac: *ramremain*

The announcement to Mary
that she would conceive God's Son
makes the Church ever joyful,
and we sing our praise to God.

From the Father, an angel
has been sent to earth this day
to announce to the Virgin:
"You will bear the One who saves."

"Here am I," said the Virgin,
"servant of the Lord my God.
Let it be as you told me,
and I thank the Lord most high."

Scene 2 – *Joseph is sleeping when the Angel Gabriel appears to him.*

Director notes: Once Mary moves out of the sanctuary, Joseph goes into the middle of the sanctuary and lies down as if asleep. He remains "sleeping" till the end of Scene 2.

Narrator: When Joseph heard the news that Mary was going to have a baby, he decided he would break the engagement quietly. Then, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said:

Gabriel: Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived a son. You will name him Jesus.

Director notes: While Hymn #3 is sung, Joseph wakes up astonished by the news he heard in the dream. He remains there on his knees in prayer. Angel Gabriel steps back into the angel choir.

Hymn #3

Syriac: *soogheeto (ramsho)*

O Joseph, rise, doubt no longer,
Mary carries Jesus, God's Word.
and she remains still a virgin,
yet the mother bearing God's Son.

Though angels fear to behold him,
You will raise him like your own son.
Since Mary is God's pure temple,
You will serve him like a high priest.



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Narrator: At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. Everyone went to register, each to his own hometown. Joseph took Mary to the town of Bethlehem, in Judea, the birthplace of King David.

Director notes: Joseph walks over to Mary and the two begin to process toward the back of the Church while Hymn #4 is sung. They stop at center aisle in the back of the Church.

Hymn #4

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.



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Scene 3 – In Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary go to the Inn to ask for a room.

Director notes: The innkeepers are positioned on the end of the pews, alternating sides, in the middle aisle of the Church. Innkeeper #1 should be on the end of the pew at the last pew. Innkeeper #2 should be somewhere in the middle of the Church on the end of the pew. Innkeeper #3 should be in the first pew closest to the sanctuary. All three innkeepers stand up when the scene begins. Joseph, leading Mary, goes to the first innkeeper. The Narrator (or someone else designated), makes the noise of knocking on a door. This continues to each of the three innkeepers.

Narrator: The journey was long and hard, and when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem they looked for a place to stay for the night.

Joseph: Excuse me, sir. May we stay here for the night?

Innkeeper #1: *(shaking his head, NO)* Sorry, no room here.

Joseph: *(turns to next innkeeper)* Excuse me, sir. May we stay here for the night?

Innkeeper #2: *(shaking his head, NO)* Sorry, no room here.

Joseph: *(turns to next innkeeper)* Excuse me, sir. May we stay here for the night?

Innkeeper #3: *(shaking his head, NO)* There's no room here. The whole town is full tonight.

Joseph: But my wife is going to have a baby. She needs a place to rest.

Innkeeper #3: There is a stable not too far. You may rest there for the night.

Director notes: Joseph, leading Mary, go to the center of the Sanctuary where the stable is set-up.

Narrator: So Mary and Joseph found shelter with the animals in their stable. They prepared a manger with warm hay, for it was in this Holy Night that the Baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped the baby in swaddling clothes and laid Him in the manger.

Director notes: While the Narrator is speaking, the Angel Gabriel hands Mary the baby Jesus. Mary then puts Jesus in the manger. The three innkeepers enter the sanctuary to also stand around the stable. Meanwhile, the two speaking angels in the angel choir go to the back of the Church in the center aisle.

Hymn #5

Syriac: *soogheeto (safro)*

Holy, holy, holy Lord God;
only Son born of the Father.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God;
only Son who dawned from Mary.



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Holy, holy, holy Lord God;
though once hidden, is revealed now.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God;
who in flesh dawned on creation.

Scene 4 – Field with shepherds tending their sheep.

Director notes: Shepherds are positioned in the back of the Church in the middle aisle, opposite the two speaking angels.

Narrator: There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the field taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them and said:

Angel #1: Do not be afraid, for behold, we bring you good news of great joy
that will be for all people.

Angel #2: This day a Savior has been born to you. You will find an infant wrapped
in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Shepherd #1: Let us go to see what these angels have told us!

Shepherd #2: Yes, we have been blessed with such news!

Narrator: Suddenly, there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.

Director notes: While Hymn #6 is sung, the two speaking angels return to the choir. The shepherds and their sheep process through the center aisle. When they reach the sanctuary, they genuflect to the baby Jesus in the manger, and then stand to the left side of the manger. Always be sure and keep the middle open so the people can see the baby Jesus.

Hymn #6

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace,
Glory to God in the highest,
and good hope to all.

*al-maj-doo lee la-hee, fil a- 'a-lee
wa 'a-lal ar-dee sa-lam,
wa-ra-ja-oo Sa-leeH-(oo)
lee-ba-nil ba-shar.*



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Scene 5 – The Three Kings.

Director notes: After the shepherds process forward, the Star and Three Kings get into place. The star stands in the middle of the center aisle and the Three Kings remain at the back of the Church in the center aisle.

Narrator: Soon after Jesus' birth, some wise men who studied the stars came from the East to Jerusalem and asked:

King #1: Where is the newborn king of the Jews?

King #2: We saw his star at its rising

King #3: We must go to worship Him.

Narrator: They continued to follow the star and it led them to the place where the child lay.

Director notes: The star begins to lead process to the sanctuary, leading the three kings. The star goes behind the altar to the middle of the sanctuary to stand on a stool (if needed) to be positioned behind the Holy Family in the stable and to be seen by the people. As the Kings approach the baby Jesus, they genuflect and leave their gifts in front of the manger, then stand to left side of the manger with the shepherds and sheep.

Hymn #7

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar.
Field and fountain, Moor and mountain,
following yonder star.
O, star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to the perfect light.

Scene 6 – All gathered around the Nativity.

Director notes: Everyone in the sanctuary looks toward the baby Jesus. After the narrator's part, everyone sings the Qadeeshat (Hymn #8) to the baby Jesus.

Narrator:

And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth. Amen



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Hymn #8

Qadeeshat

Qa-dee-shat a-lo-ho
Qa-dee-shat ha-yel-to-no
Qa-dee-shat lo-mo-yoo-to.

mshee-ho deh-tee-led men bat da-weed,
it-ra-ham 'a-lain.

Director notes: Everyone turns back toward the audience and sings together, loud and joyfully, hymn #8.

Hymn #8

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

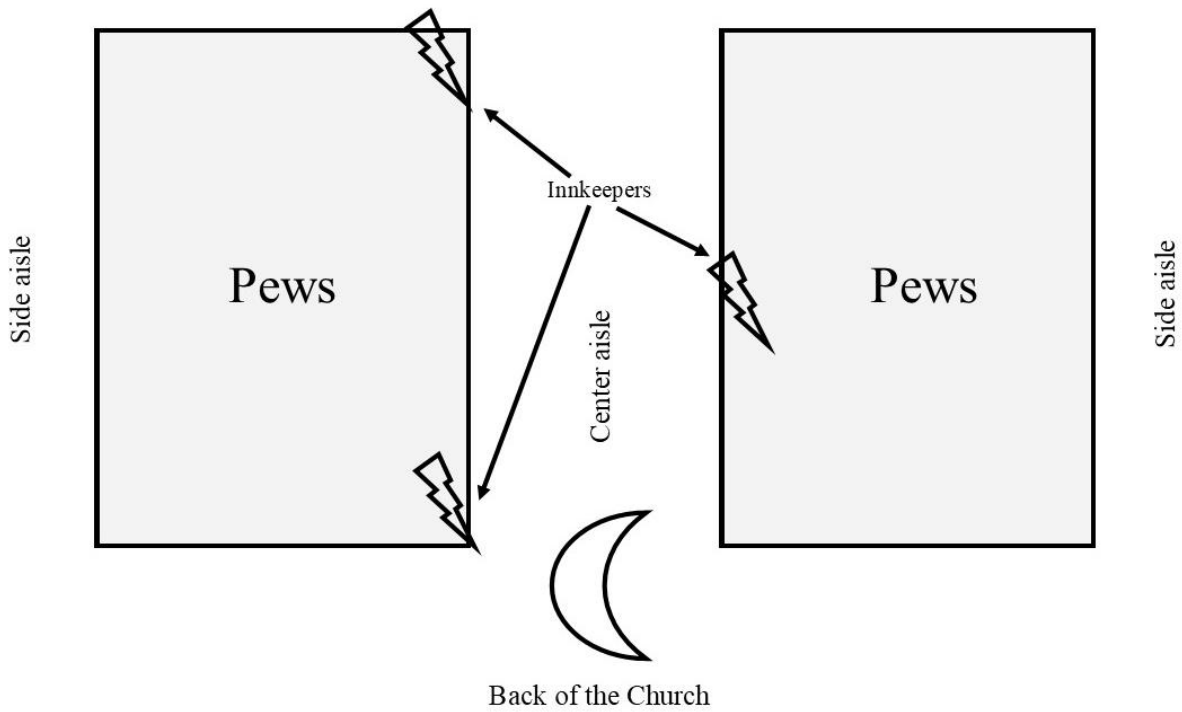
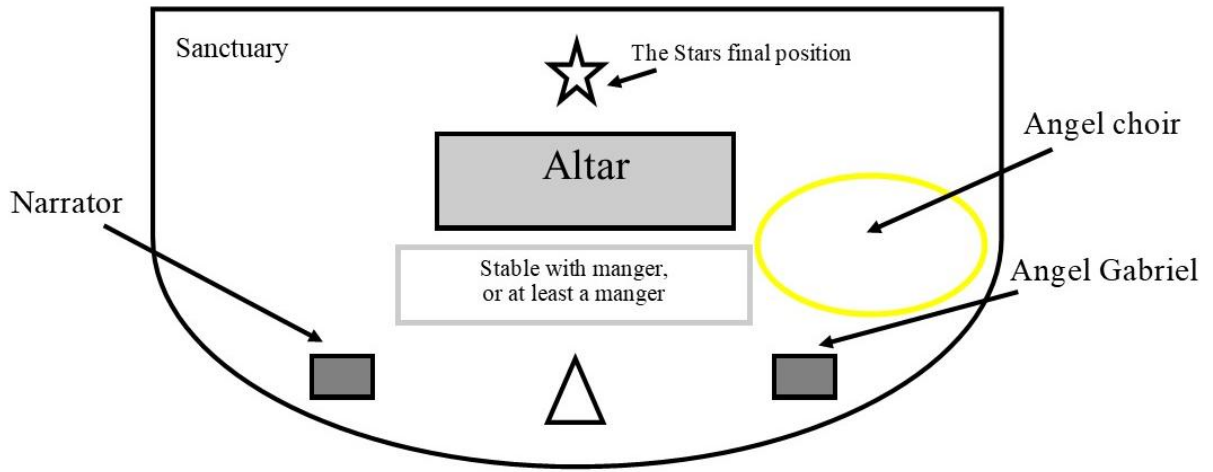
Joy to the world! The Savior reigns;
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.



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Basic diagram to help with scene placement and movement in the Church with adjustments as necessary.



- △ Where Mary and then Joseph will position themselves during their scenes
- ☾ Back of the Church where Joseph & Mary will stand before approaching the Innkeepers. Where the Shepherds and two speaking angels will meet. Where the Three Kings will stand, with the star positioned half-way up the center aisle.

