

Gabriel's Message to Mary

This is the first scene that people will see. Gabriel stands before a humbled Mary to deliver God's message. There are no spoken lines, you will use gestures to convey your message. Gabriel is perched on a slightly elevated platform and will raise his hands to heaven, and then swing them into a motion like rocking a baby. Mary is seated and reacts with fear to Gabriel and his message. You will perform these motions repeatedly as cars pass by.

Suggested Dialogue: No dialogue

Gabriel – use emphatic gestures expressing joyful news, comfort and reassurance. Point to the heavens and indicate a baby by using your hands in a rocking motion.

Mary – kneeling before Gabriel has expressions of fear, astonishment, wonder, and prayerful humble acceptance

Traveling Mary & Joseph

Joseph and a pregnant Mary (using prosthetic) rest on their journey. Mary is seated on a hay bale and Joseph stands behind her holding the rope of the donkey. You are with a live donkey. Animal handlers will be nearby. There are no spoken lines. You can converse quietly between each other, always remaining in character.

Suggested Dialogue: No dialogue

Joseph – stands behind Mary holding the donkey's rope and is attentive to his wife

Mary – sits on straw and talks quietly with Joseph

Angel on the Mount & Shepherds

This is one of the most impressive scenes. The Angel, placed on a deer stand, visits the shepherds to tell them of Christ's birth. She will gesture beginning with arms spread wide and then move them into praying hands and to a baby rocking motion. This motion is done repeatedly as cars pass by. The shepherds are below in their fields. There will be live sheep that are tethered to a stake. Animal handlers will be nearby. The angel must be at least 13 years old and tall enough to be clipped into the deer stand. It is preferable if the shepherds are a family or group of people that sign up as a group. Small children are ok to be at this scene.

Suggested Dialogue: No dialogue

Angel – use expressive gestures to announce the good news. Spread arms wide and then bring them into prayer and then to a baby rocking motion.

Shepherds – listen in awe and fear, shield yourself with hand gestures or kneel and listen attentively

Enrollment Table

After the shepherds in the field, cars reach the Enrollment table. Cast members here are dressed as Villagers and will be counting the visitors to Bethlehem. You will approach each vehicle and ask, "How many are travelling with you today?" This is recorded on a scroll and is how we keep track of how many people drive through each night. This year, you will also ask them to pay their census taxes. As they enter the parking lot, each vehicle will have been given coins to pay. You are the only scene that will interact with the visitors. Without breaking character, please make them feel welcome and let them know we are glad they are here.

Suggested Dialogue:

Welcome to Bethlehem.

You must be tired from the long journey.

How many do you have entering the city?

How many are travelling with you today?

Do you have your census taxes?

Herod's Court

Just after cars drive through the city gates, they see King Herod's Court. There are three Wise Men with maps and the King is directing them to find the baby. Attendants wait on King Herod. The King speaks to the Wise Men, and they return dialogue. The Attendants do not speak.

Suggested Dialogue:

King Herod – signals Wise Men to show him their maps, gets up to look at the star, directs attendants to dance or bring him things, “Go and search carefully for the child. Report to me so that I too may go and worship him.”

*Wise Men – approach King with their map, kneel before him, look at each other and nod; “How shall we find this child?”
“The star appeared tonight.”*

Attendants – recline on pillows, follow the King's directions

Women at the Well

Women gather at the well to draw water and gossip. They stand around the well with pitchers and pretend to draw water from the well. This is a scene for women of any age and very young boys. Small children are allowed at this scene.

Suggested Dialogue:

Have you heard the news?

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

So many travelers have come for the census.

Look at all the people coming for the census.

There are many soldiers out tonight.

Talk about the baby born in the stable – why isn't he in the inn?

Basket Weavers

Women pretend to make baskets and try to sell them as villagers pass. They discuss the rumors of a savior born, what the star could mean and the gossip of the day. This is a scene for women of all ages and very young boys. Small children are allowed at this scene.

Suggested Dialogue:

Have you heard the news?

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

So many travelers have come for the census.

Look at all the people coming for the census.

There are many soldiers out tonight.

Talk about the baby born in the stable – why isn't he in the inn?

Baskets for sale?

Buy a basket?

Carpenter's Shop

The carpenter and his apprentice work on wood products in their shop, sawing, hammering, and measuring. This is a scene where the sounds of Bethlehem can be heard through the hammering. Cast members should make efforts to

make the noises loud. The Carpenter needs to be an adult male, and the apprentice a young or teen male. The cast members can discuss their projects they are working on, the star in the sky and the rumors of the baby.

Suggested Dialogue:

It's good to see you.

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

So many travelers have come for the census.

Look at all the people coming for the census.

There are many soldiers out tonight.

Talk about the baby born in the stable – why isn't he in the inn?

Blacksmith's Shop

The Blacksmith and his apprentice work on metal products in their shop. This is a scene where the sounds of Bethlehem can be heard through the striking of an anvil and metal on metal. There is also a fire pit on scene. Cast members should make efforts to make the noises loud. The Blacksmith needs to be an adult male, and the apprentice a young or teen male. The cast members can discuss their projects they are working on, the star in the sky and the rumors of the baby.

Suggested Dialogue:

It's good to see you.

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

So many travelers have come for the census.

Look at all the people coming for the census.

There are many soldiers out tonight.

Talk about the baby born in the stable – why isn't he in the inn?

Market Vendors

This is a busy scene where vendors are selling their products and villagers roam through the market area shopping and looking. You will be assigned to a particular stall and will need to remain in that area the entire shift. Encourage people to touch your products and purchase items. Be loud so that the cars can hear you. It is a loud, bustling area. This is a perfect scene for young children – they can help you in your stall.

Suggested Dialogue: *denarii is the monetary unit*

Look at all the people here.

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

_____ for sale. Only _____ denarii.

Good to see you again!

Try my bread/vegetables/etc. They are delicious.

Innkeeper & Wife

The Innkeeper and his wife stand outside of the Inn and tell visitors there is no room in the inn. They may respond to villagers asking for a room, or they can direct their comments to the cars passing by. Be forceful about having no rooms and say that even the stable is full.

Suggested Dialogue:

I'm sorry we have no rooms left.

Even the stable is full.

I sent a woman heavy with child to the stable.

We hear her child was born in the hay.

There are too many travelers – we have no rooms.

Nativity

This is the biggest scene. The stable where Jesus was born. All roles are in awe of the baby. The Angel is on a slight pedestal and raises their hands to the sky in praise. Mary and Joseph stand close to the manger and watch over the baby. The Wise Men stand to the side and one by one, come to kneel at the manger and offer their gifts. The shepherds watch the baby and tend their sheep. There are live sheep and other animals at this scene. Animal handlers are close by. Baby Jesus can be a live baby, or we can use a baby doll.

Suggested Dialogue: *no dialogue*

Angel – gestures the good news

Mary & Joseph – stand close to the manger and are attentive to the baby and each other

Shepherds and Wise Men – watch in awe, occasionally one may come forward and kneel at the manger; wise men can offer their gifts

Roman Guards

These cast members walk through the city with an air of authority and interact with villagers while they look for the baby. They will also rotate through stations: the entrance to the parking lot, the city gates, Herod's Court, and the Market area. They should display a sense of urgency and seriousness. This is a role for older teens and adults.

Suggested Dialogue:

Keep moving.

What do you know of a child born in a stable?

What does this star mean?

Where can we find the child?

Villagers

This is the most popular cast position. You can walk through the market area, past the blacksmith, carpenter, basket weavers and the well. Keep moving slowly and evenly. Please do not congregate in front of scenes. Converse with Market Vendors, discuss the star and rumors of a new baby. Please stay on the sides of the road and do not go to Herod's Court or past it. Young children are welcome in this role, but please make sure to keep a close eye on them since there will be cars moving through the area.

Suggested Dialogue:

Barter with shopkeepers.

Show joy at seeing a friend.

Have you heard the news?

Have you seen the star? What does it mean?

So many travelers have come for the census.

Look at all the people coming for the census.

There are many soldiers out tonight.

Talk about the baby born in the stable – why isn't he in the inn?