

Advent Liturgy for Primary School Students

You will need:

- This script
- A candle(s)
- The Advent Liturgy PowerPoint

Slide 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have this slide on as pupils enter the space where the liturgy is being held. • Suggested song for entry - https://youtu.be/rwjFuJ2X_rc Phil Wickham – Star of Wonder
Slide 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to our liturgy • You may have picked up on some of the words of the song we heard as we came in. God of Wonder God of Light God is with us Here tonight • It reminds us that God is here with us, wherever we may be, He is here with us in everything we do. • Let's begin by making the sign of the cross. • In the name of the Father...
Slide 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You might have heard this song, Love Shone Down before. It tells the story of the Nativity of Jesus from the perspective of the shepherds. This is how the shepherds described what it was like when Jesus came into the world. • Let's light our candle(s) now to show that we too are bringing Jesus into this space. • Light your candle or candles. The leader could do this, or supervised children.
Slide 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's hear about what the shepherds saw that night by listening to a reading from St Luke's Gospel: (The leader could read this, another staff member or a pupil/pupils). <p>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,</p> <p>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"</p> <p>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and</p>

	<p>see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.</p> <p><u>Scripture reference - Luke 2:1-20 RSV-CE. You could use whichever translation you prefer for your scripture reading.</u></p>
Slide 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shepherds were just regular people, just like any of these people on the pictures (you could also add pictures of your students here if you would like to). • They were invited into something extraordinary! Just like we are each day. We too are invited to know Jesus.
Slide 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, in some places around the world people can be treated badly because of their desire to get to know Jesus. • Aid to the Church in Need is a charity that supports Christian people so that they can practise their faith in peace. They are one of many charities which shows the love of Jesus to people who are in need.
Slide 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majed is one of those people who needs the help of Aid to the Church in Need. 10 years ago Majed and his family were forced out of their home, because of their Christian faith. It was no longer safe for them in their home town, so they had to leave, along with many millions of other people. • Majed and his family had to move over 80 miles away, to a different country, Lebanon. They have found a new home in the city of Zahlé. Although they are happy there and feel safe, they face some struggles, as they are refugees in Lebanon, which can make things tricky.
Slide 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majed and his family are happy to be safe in Lebanon, but miss their old life in Syria too. • ACN and the Church in Zahlé, Lebanon, have helped to take care of people like Majed and his family for many years. Thanks to people who fundraise and give donations, Aid are able to provide the money needed for things like food, housing, medical care, schooling and much more. • Majed and his family also benefit from a special ACN project called St John the Merciful Table, which is a kitchen where people can receive meals if they don't have enough to eat. Before Covid people used to gather together and enjoy their meal at the café, but since 2020 people have been getting their meal as a takeaway. • When ACN spoke to Majed, he spoke a little bit about Christmas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sometimes during Christmas my family gets sad and say that we are homesick. They even cry a bit Because Dad says that we had a beautiful house and also the church was beautiful at Christmas, but now

	<p>it's all gone. But we don't complain because Dad says that we have to thank God. My Christmas wish is that people think about families like mine and help us refugees to have hope for a better future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACN want to say thank you to all the supporters of ACN who help them bring hope to Majed and his family, and we pray that one day they might be able to return to their home in Syria.
Slide 9	<p>Thinking about Majed and all who may be struggling, let us come together and pray. (You can have volunteers to pray the bidding prayers)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let us pray for Majed and his family, and for all refugees. We pray that they may be safe and find peace wherever they might be. Lord in your mercy... 2. Let us pray for all people in our community who are struggling right now. For those who are sick, worried or burdened down with something – we ask you Jesus to support them with their struggles. Lord in your mercy... 3. Let us pray for all of us at our school – students, staff, parents and families. We pray that we might all have a peaceful Advent season, and a happy Christmas. Lord in your mercy... 4. Let us pray for all people of faith, that they may be free to practice their faith peacefully. We pray for all those who suffer because of their religious beliefs. Lord in your mercy... <p>Let's bring all our prayers together and pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, Our Father...</p> <p>You may want to add a song or hymn of your choice here.</p>
Slide 10	<p>Thank you! The image on the screen can serve as a reminder of the real joy of Christmas!</p>

If you would like to fundraise for ACN this Advent, why not think about supporting our Gifts of Faith campaign? >

https://acnuk.org/products/?keywords=&product_type=37&product_category=0&search=1&filter=Filter

Each gift gives a clear ask and tells you where the money will go and what support it will give. If you would like to do this, you could always add an extra slide with details of suggested gifts that your school could give.

Video link – Majed's Story: <https://youtu.be/YIAviWZSMIE>

Majed's Story – Video script

My name is Majed,

And this is my family.
We live in Lebanon now,
But my dad says that we are originally from Syria
And our home is also in Syria.
Dad says the bad people chased us away
And we had to flee;
Like more than one million people from my country.
Dad says that as a child I became a refugee,
Like baby Jesus,
Who also had to flee with his Mum and Dad.
Mum was taking care of the house,
But she is sick now.
When there's nothing to eat,
We go to the place where we receive meals from the Church.
Sometimes we refugees get sanitary things at the church.
Sometimes during Christmas my family gets sad
And say that we are homesick.
They even cry a bit
Because Dad says that we had a beautiful house
And also the church was beautiful at Christmas,
But now it's all gone.
But we don't complain because Dad says that we have to thank God.
My Christmas wish is that people think about families like mine
And help us refugees to have hope for a better future.

ACN news story about Majed

Lebanon: "I became a refugee, just like the Child Jesus"

"I'm called Majed. I now live with my family in Lebanon, but my father tells me that we are originally from Syria and that our real home is there." This twelve-year-old boy is one of the thousands of refugees who were forced to leave their country and seek refuge in the town of Zaleh in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon.

Majed was just three years old at the time and has no memory of the horrors of the war in Syria, which his father describes to the international Catholic pastoral charity ***Aid to the Church in Need (ACN International)***: “At least fifty people in our own locality died in six months, while others were abducted. Many others had their possessions and their means of survival destroyed and burnt. We endured it for a year, living in hell – with no work, no electricity, no schools, no food. We daily ran the risk of being shot by snipers. The closure of the schools left an entire generation without education.”

Ever since the war began, the Christians were aware that the only thing the terrorists wanted was for them to go away. Many Christians in Syria relate how the terrorist groups would repeat a simple formula – ‘the Alawites to the grave, the Christians to Beirut’ (the Alawi, or Alawites, are a Shiite religious group to which President Assad also belongs. Beirut is the capital of Lebanon). “It was a war, with everything that that implies. Even before the situation had deteriorated, we and our Christian neighbours knew that our streets had already been shared out, some of the neighbours were even guessing who was going to get one house and who another”, Basman Abboud explains, with immense sadness.

Majid doesn’t even recall how they fled from their country, but his father Basman Abboud will never ever be able to forget it. “They attacked us with guns, although we were completely defenceless. They killed fifteen young people and burned down five houses. Everybody fled. We ran, along with everybody else, not taking anything with us except the clothes on our backs. We ran out of our homes and fled.” They arrived in Zahleh on March 20, 2012, a date the family will never ever forget, since it remains a tragic event in their history. Initially they lodged with a relative who had sought refuge in Zahleh a few months earlier; fifteen people in the same house, sleeping in turns, because there were not enough places for them all to sleep. It was winter and they didn’t even have coats. It was in the midst of this situation, Majid’s father explains, “that we heard that the Catholic archbishop was providing aid for the refugees. What would have happened to us without this help from the diocese? We’ve had to cope with so many different problems since we arrived here...”

Although after a few months he found work and was able to move into a two-roomed house, the money he earned was barely enough to pay the rent and electricity and other essential household expenses. And so Basman and Majid and their family were grateful to be able to take advantage of the food aid programme known as the “St. John the Merciful Table”, an emergency meals programme for the Syrian refugee families and the Lebanese families thrown into poverty by the terrible crisis.

“Thanks be to God, without this aid we would not have known what to do, since on top of everything else, owing to the COVID-19 crisis, we had no work for a whole year. If the Lebanese themselves don’t have any work and face a very difficult situation, then what can be said about us? We are refugees in Lebanon. Without the help of the diocese, including the medical care, since the Tel-chiha hospital, which is run by the diocese as well, also helped us with surgery for my wife”, Basman explains.

Prayer has always been the great support and strength of this family during these years of such great privation and suffering. “The Lord is present, and we trust in his presence. We are still all alive, and we are grateful to all those who have been so good to us and we pray that God may reward them, because we can never repay them for what they are doing for us. But God sees and knows everything they are doing for us”, he said.

Majid is happy at the thought that Christmas is coming soon, but things are still difficult at times. "I have become a refugee, just like the Child Jesus, who also had to flee together with his parents. Sometimes my family gets sad and feels nostalgic. And there are also tears when daddy tells us that we once had a beautiful house, light and spacious. The church used to be decorated and welcoming for everyone at Christmas time, but now everything has disappeared. My desire for Christmas is that people may think of families like mine and help refugees to have hope in a better future. Happy Christmas everyone!"

Please note:

The CHRISTMAS SPOT LEBANON is related to this feature story

It is also related to the **project included in the dossier:**

LEBANON / ZAHLEH-MLC 21/00070

ID 2100971

"Saint John the Merciful Table" for Syrian refugees and others in Zahlé area and Bekaa Valley (03/2021- 02/ 2022)

EUR 700,000

www: 398-00-00

Furthermore the Archdiocese of Zahlé is supporting 350 Syrian families with special assistance programs (*ACN has generously supported the Archdiocese with these assistance to refugees projects since 2014 and is studying the request to continue to do so for the upcoming year*) including:

- Food, Hygiene, Rent, Diapers, heating oil for 1 year
- Medical assistance "Primary care" (medications and visiting doctors) + "Secondary care" (invoices for hospitalization).
- Governmental annual dues for 200 families – According to Lebanese regulations, each person should pay a fee once a year to the general security body in order to renew their papers and thus stay legally in Lebanon.