

## Lesson 2

## Luke 2

## Birth and Hidden Life of Jesus

1. How did a decree from Rome by Caesar Augustus ensure that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem? (Luke 2:1-5)
2. Why do you think God would choose shepherds—who were often seen as lowly or marginalized in society—to be the first to hear about the birth of the Messiah? (Luke 1:52; Luke 2:10-11)
3. The angel's song of praise in Luke 2:14 has been adapted for use in the church's Eucharistic liturgy. What is this song called and when is it sung or spoken during the liturgy?

***Note: Forty days after the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph went to the Jerusalem temple for two reasons: first, to fulfill the ritual purification required of a woman after childbirth, as outlined in Leviticus 12:1 and, second, to present Jesus to the Lord in the Temple, fulfilling the commandment in Exodus 13:2, which required the consecration of the firstborn male to God. We remember this event each time we say the 4<sup>th</sup> Joyful Mystery of the Rosary.***

4. In the temple, two different people recognized the baby Jesus as the Messiah. Who were they and why are they important? (Luke 2:25-38)
5. Read Simeon's prayer of thanksgiving to God. (Luke 2:29-32) What had Simeon said in his prayer about the child that could have "amazed" both Joseph and Mary?
6. Luke ends the infancy narrative of Jesus with a summary (Luke 2:40), in the same way he ends the infancy narrative of John the Baptist (Luke 1:80). How are these two summaries alike? And different?

***Note: On pilgrimages to Jerusalem, the Jews used to go in two groups—one of men, the other of women. Children could go with either group. This explains how they could go a day's journey before they discovered the Child was missing when the families regrouped to camp for the night. We remember this event each time we say the 5<sup>th</sup> Joyful Mystery of the Rosary***

7. In your imagination, picture the boy Jesus sitting among the teachers, "listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46-47). What strikes you about the scene?
8. When Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple, we hear the first words Jesus spoke in the Bible narrative. What did Jesus say? (Luke 2:49) What is their significance?
9. When Mary did not understand Jesus' reply, how did she deal with her inability to understand? (Luke 2:51) How is this good advice for us when faced with something we do not understand?

### ***If You Would Like a Challenge?***

10. How does the angel's message of "peace among men with whom he is pleased" apply to you? Do you enjoy that peace? If so, how can you grow in it? If not, how can you enter it? (Luke 2:14)
11. Only Matthew and Luke describe the birth of Jesus. What are some similarities and differences in the two gospel accounts? (Luke 2:1-21; Matt 2:1-16)