

Liturgy

Focusing on the crib remind the children

- how we made/display a crib to bring to life the story of Christmas
- of the Christmas story and how the baby Jesus had no bed to sleep in, but he had his mummy Mary, and Joseph who loved him so much
- that today there are some people who were still on the way to Bethlehem....

Introduce the three kings and place them in your crib.

Talk about the story of how the Magi came from far away, how they knew all about the stars; how they travelled a long long way.

Ask the children if they can remember anyone else who visited baby Jesus – hopefully, someone will say the shepherds. Explain that there were lots of differences between the shepherds and the wise men – see if the children can think of any.

- The shepherds were poor; the wise men were rich.
- The shepherds came from the same country as Jesus (they were Jews); the wise men came from a different country (they were Gentiles) – Jews and Gentiles didn't ever mix with each other.
- The shepherds were in the fields close by; the wise men travelled a long way.
- Angels appeared to the shepherds; the wise men followed a star.

Though they were so different, God wanted the wise men and the shepherds to see the baby Jesus. Explain that this shows us that God wants everyone to see Jesus. In God's eyes, it doesn't matter if we are rich or poor or what country we come from.

Talk about the gifts of the Magi exploring the strangeness, the richness, and the symbolism of the gifts.

Gold is bright and precious. It never rusts or spoils. A gift fit for a king. Jesus was King

Frankincense a special kind of fragrance was burned in the Temple, in the time when Jesus lived in the land of Israel. We still burn it in churches today. Its smoke rises up - it seems to be rising up to heaven. And when the smoke rises, the smell rises too.

Myrrh is the strangest gift of all, for a baby. Myrrh was put on the bodies of people who had died. And people used to burn it at funerals. Myrrh makes people think of death and reminds us of the importance of Jesus death and how he died to save us.

It might be possible for the children have a chance to touch the gifts of the three wise men.

Revisit the symbolism of the crib now that it is complete:

- ❖ **The simplicity of God's love and the magnitude of his caring for everyone especially the poor, needy and suffering rich and poor and from all places of on earth.**
- ❖ **To remember that there people among us and near us that find Christmas very difficult and that not everyone has a Christmas of fun and treats**
- ❖ **The greatest gift that they can give is being kind thoughtful and helpful**

¹http://www.sharingthelight.co.uk/Christmas_and_Epiphany.html

