# DECEMBER: WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

**CLASSROOM SHEET**

**Opening Prayer:** Dear God, we thank you that you sent Jesus to us through the Holy Spirit. Help us always to be open to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Bible verses:** Luke 1:26-38

**Information:**

* The story of the annunciation.
* What are the 4 Marian Dogmas? (Dogmas are truths of the faith that will never change, they are 100% correct)
  + Mother of God (Theo[God]-tokos[bearer]) – not just the mother of a special man, but Jesus actually was God. He was one person with two natures, God and man.
  + Immaculate Conception – Mary was conceived without sin by her parents, Joachim & Ann. Mary never sinned because Jesus saved it from her. This can be explained through a metaphor. There is a hole in the ground (sin). We all fall into it, and Jesus pulls us out. But Jesus stopped Mary before she ever fell into the hole. (The little kids may enjoy acting this out if you pull them up!)
  + Perpetual Virginity – Mary remained pure her whole life and dedicated to God
  + Assumption – Mary died, but her body did not rot like ours do. She was carried to heaven by the power of God. Some other saints died, but had bodies that did not corrupt, but they weren’t carried to heaven. Let’s look some up! The most famous are St. Bernadette, St. John Vianney, St. Vincent DePaul, St. Catherine of Labore, St. Catherine of Bologna, and St. Rita of Cascia.
* What does Mary do now?
  + Mary intercedes (prays) for us
  + Mary is our Mother and will take care of us. We can always turn to her when we are troubled.

**Discussion points (make it your own):**

* The story of the annunciation.
* Mary was around 15 and was very prayerful and always did good
* The angel Gabriel was very scary and powerful, but he comforted Mary and said, “be not afraid.”
* Mary did not fully understand what God was asking, but she said “Yes” to God’s will in her life
* Joseph was engaged to Mary. He did not know what was going on and was confused too when Mary was pregnant. An angel appeared to him and asked him to “be not afraid,” and “take Mary into your home.” Joseph also didn’t understand fully what God was asking, but he said, “Yes” to God too.

**Questions/Activities:**

**young:**

* Act out the story of the annunciation. The little kids love this!

**middle:**

* Do a step-by-step trust activity. Give each child a paper plate and marker. The must put the plate (face down) on top of their head. Tell them, step-by-step, to first draw a square. Next draw a triangle on top of the square. Finally, draw a circle inside the square. Now they can take it off their heads and look at their final product. Your instructions were step-by-step, so at the beginning, you didn’t know what the final goal was. But at the end, you realize the final goal was to draw a house. Mary only saw the first step, but she still said “yes” to God. What were the other steps in Mary’s life and what was the end goal?

**older:**

* Some interesting tidbits of the Nativity story. Nativity means “birth” by the way.
  + Jesus was laid in a manger. A manger is the feeding bucket of animals. Why is this significant? (Jesus is the bread of life who will feed the world with his Body and Blood)
  + Bethlehem means “house of bread.” Why do you think this is significant? (Jesus is the bread of life)
  + Lambs that were sacrificed in the temple were wrapped in swaddling clothes after birth to prevent any scratches. They had to be unblemished and pure. Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Why is this significant? (Jesus is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The one final completely pure sacrifice to the Father.)
  + Joseph and Mary were denied access to the Inn because there was no “room” for them. Not “space” but actual room. This was because Mary was about to give birth, and childbirth created a mess. Everything would have to be deep-cleaned and ritually purified. No one wanted to go through that extra work, so Jesus was born in a cave used as a stable. Think of an instance where you didn’t/don’t want to go through the extra work like the inn-keeper. We can end up denying Jesus a room in our hearts.
  + The people that came to visit Jesus were wise men and shepherds. The wise men were foreigners. The shepherds were outcasts that everyone knew to be crooks. Why do you think these people came to visit Jesus first?

**Closing Prayer: Pray the Creed together. Saint \_\_\_\_\_\_, pray for us!**