

# First Sunday after Christmas

*Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt.*

—Matthew 2:14 NRSV

## Explore

### First Steps on the Journey

Choose two students to be Travelers. Have the others form a circle around them. (If your class is small, invite other classes to join for this opening activity.) Instruct the Travelers to close their eyes and spin in place several times to become slightly disoriented. Then have them move around inside the circle with eyes closed, trying to return to the center. Members in the circle are to keep the Travelers safe by not allowing them to stumble or bump into each other and to direct them back to the center of the circle. After a short time, select two new Travelers to make their journey. Repeat for as many students who wish to be Travelers.

Process this activity by saying: “When we go forward in faith, we are trusting God. God is faithful and will support each one of us just as the members of the circle supported us when we were Travelers. In today’s lesson, we meet others who, trusting God, went forward in faith.”

## Extract

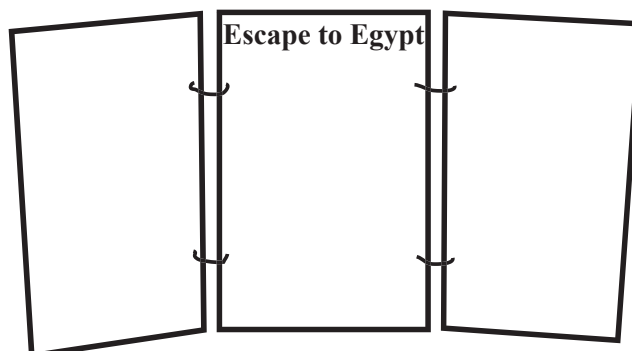
### Escape to Egypt

Read Matthew 2:13–18 (Matthew 3:13–18 IV). Review the events that led to this time. Describe Joseph’s dream. Give each student a sheet of card stock and illustrate Joseph’s dream. What were the conditions at home? Where were Joseph, Mary, and Jesus to go? What prophecy was fulfilled by this action? Who was the prophet giving the prophecy?

Read Matthew 2:19–21/Matthew 3:19–21 IV. Ask the students to describe what happened next. Give an additional sheet of card stock and illustrate scene two. Who appeared? What was their destination?

Read Matthew 2:22–23/Matthew 3:22–23 IV. Provide a third sheet of card stock and illustrate scene three. Who was king and what was his relationship to Herod? How was Joseph warned? Where were they told to go? What prophecy was fulfilled this time? What acts of faith can be identified in the story?

Make triptychs by connecting each of the three illustrated cards together. Originally triptychs were ancient writing tablets composed of three panels of writing, pictures, designs, or carvings hinged or tied together. They were used predominately as altar pieces. Today this art form is used in many ways. Suggest students look for it in advertising, in museums, and even at school. A science fair display might be considered a triptych. Use tape or punch holes and join the three cards with string. Place the triptychs on end adjusting outside panels forward slightly until the triptych stands by itself. Display throughout your place of worship.



Bible, card stock,  
fine point markers,  
pastels or colored  
pencils, tape or  
string

Matthew 2:13–23/  
3:13–23 IV

## Other Faithful Journeys

### Old Testament

Ask a volunteer to read Isaiah 63:7–9. Briefly retell or have a student tell the story of Moses leading the people out of Egypt. The passage from Isaiah is referring to this event to remind the people of God’s saving activity on behalf of the people throughout their history—a reference to the covenant between God and the Hebrew people.

Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants

### New Testament

Read Hebrews 2:10–18. Hebrews was written to the new Jewish–Christians who were pioneers in a new faith as followers of Jesus Christ. In the same time period, Gentile–Christians were venturing out in new faith not knowing what the future would be.

Isaiah 63:7–9  
Hebrews 2:10–18  
I Nephi 1:26–34  
Doctrine and Covenants 17:1a  
Doctrine and Covenants 162:2a

### Book of Mormon

Read I Nephi 1:26–34. Tell the story of Lehi and his family journeying into the wilderness.

*Herald*, June 2004

### Doctrine and Covenants

Read Section 17:1a. This passage marks the organizational date of the Community of Christ. This was the result of a teen who went forward in faith. His responding in faith led to

*...the largest and most influential religious movement birthed on American soil.  
We are a slice of that movement—in my view its most faithful and hopeful slice.  
— McMurray, “The Passion of the Disciple: From Cross to Community,” 2004,  
World Conference sermon, Herald, (June 2004), p. 6.*

Read Section 162:2a. What does it say about going forward in faith today?

*Listen carefully to your own journey as a people, for it is a sacred journey and it has taught you many things you must know for the journey yet to come.*

What other faithful journeys either of groups or individuals can the class recall from the sacred story? List stories on a flip chart and discuss enough details so others can remember or learn. Does your congregation, your family, or your personal history have a story about a faithful journey? Allow time for sharing. Return to the topic at a later date to see if anyone has discovered new stories.

two large sheets of paper, markers, clock, list on page 110

## Concrete Faith

Divide into two teams and provide each with a large sheet of paper and a marker. Select one student from each team to be a scribe. Challenge the teams to list as many concrete examples of faith as they can in your set time limit. When time ends, share each list. Examples are found on page 110.

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## Expand

paper, pens,

## God Moves among the Faithful

The faithful trust and are willing to follow, leaving behind the familiar, adventuring toward the new. Prayer, study, and the sacraments are tools available to encourage the journey.

Ask: “At the beginning of a new year, what action will you take to be a faithful participant in the sacred story?” Respond on the paper provided.

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**Lectionary scriptures**—Isaiah 63:7–9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10–18; Matthew 2:13–23/3:13–23 IV; I Nephi 1:26–34; Doctrine and Covenants 12:4–5b