

Mustard Seed Series

CHRISTIAN FAITH FORMATION



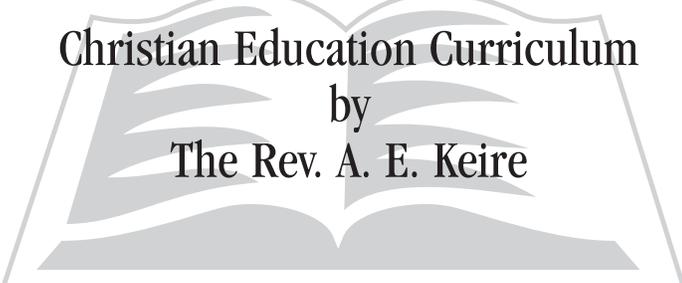
Intermediate 2



Intermediate 2
Teacher Book



MUSTARD SEED SERIES



Christian Education Curriculum
by
The Rev. A. E. Keire

Curriculum Development
Associates, Inc.

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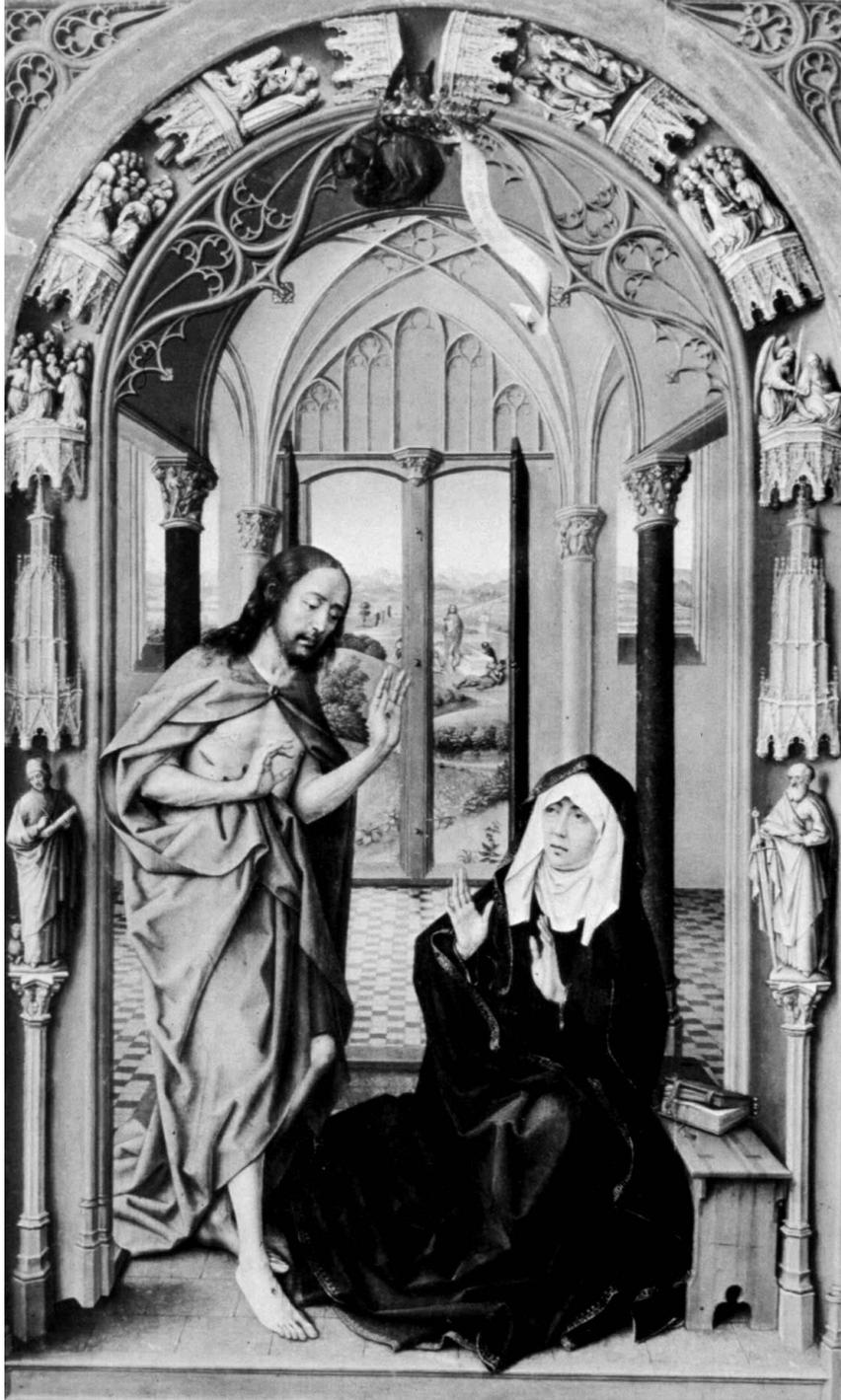
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Rogier van der Weyden
Christ Appearing to His Mother
1440-5



INTERMEDIATE 2

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A D V E N T

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FOCUS

- Birth of Jesus
- Encountering and Receiving Jesus into Our Hearts
- Self-giving
- “The Shoemaker Michael”



ATTENDANCE AND SHARING



REVIEW

- What did we learn last week about Isaiah’s prophecy of the Messiah? (Many people interpreted Isaiah’s Messiah
 - as a great light who would lead them out of darkness,
 - as a person who would set them free from oppression,
 - and as a royal person who would establish an everlasting kingdom of peace and justice.)
 - What happened to Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth when he proclaimed himself as God’s chosen to set the captive free, to restore sight to the blind, and to announce that the time has come for the Lord to save his people?
 - At first the people were impressed with Jesus’ understanding of scripture.
 - Then they remembered his humble beginnings.
 - They rejected Jesus as the Messiah and tried to kill him.
 - In the story “The Shoemaker Michael,” why did Michael want to die? (His family was dead, and he had no other reason to live.)
 - How did Michael come to read the Bible? (The minister gave it to him to put a new cover on it, and he encouraged Michael to read it.)
- What did Michael dream one night? (He dreamed that Jesus was coming to visit him the next day.)



CLASS PREPARATION FOR TODAY’S LESSON

- No doubt many of you have read stories about kings, queens, princes, and princesses.
 - In what type of buildings do these people live?
 - What type of people surround the royal person?
- If you are awaiting the birth of the future king, where do you think he should be born?
- What type of people would surround him?



TODAY’S LESSON AND DISCUSSION POSSIBILITIES

- Let us read about the birth of Jesus. Turn in your Bibles to Luke 2:1-20. Intersperse your comments and discussion possibilities as you deem appropriate.
 - A census caused Joseph and Mary to leave their home in Nazareth and travel to Bethlehem to be counted by the Roman officials.
 - There was no room in the inn for them. They found shelter in a barn or stable. Jesus was laid in a manger, which is a feeding trough for animals.

LUKE 2:1-20;
4:18-19

Birth of Jesus and Encountering Jesus



Don’t be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David’s town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord!



LUKE 2:10-11

MATERIALS

- Bibles
- “The Shoemaker Michael”
- Student Books
- Activity Supplies
- Music to *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

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- The announcement of Jesus' birth goes to shepherds, who were on the lowest rung of society. Yet God chose to announce Jesus' birth first to them, and they believed that Jesus was the world's savior.
- The circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth tell us about God's understanding of us and about God's purposes for Jesus.
 - The inns, with no room for Jesus, represent the people who have no room for Jesus in their lives and hearts.
 - Jesus' birth in a stable tells us that he will be a part of this world, even though he would not be accepted by many people.
 - Jesus came for the lowly to bring them hope, joy, peace, and love.
 - Our fate is wrapped up in Jesus' fate. Jesus identifies with us, and we are to identify with Jesus.
- Let us reread what Jesus claims to be his purpose in life. Let us read Luke 4:18-19.
 - Can you understand the relationship between Jesus' birth in a stable and Jesus' purpose of freeing his people with God's message?
- Now I will finish reading the story "The Shoemaker Michael." As you listen to this story, think how Jesus' influence caused Michael to change.
- Discussion possibilities
 - What did you think of this story?
 - Would you have done as Michael did? Why?
 - How did Jesus influence Michael's behavior—or did he?
 - Did you feel sorry for Hazel, the bag woman? Why?
 - What were your thoughts about the young woman and child?
 - What does Michael mean when he says punishment is our way and not God's way?
 - How can the old people teach us a better way?
 - How did Jesus speak to Michael through the Bible? (If time permits, read the entire quotation from Matthew.)
 - Michael's story tries to give an example of how we can find God in our daily lives through reaching out to other people and trying to help them. Jesus came for the needy; and we, as followers of Jesus, are to reach out to the needy. Sometimes, all the needy need is a kind word to show that people care about them. This was the case with Hazel.
- God gave us the greatest gift we can ever have when God revealed Godself to us through Jesus. Through Jesus' birth and childhood, God is saying to us, "Do not be fooled by appearances. God's people are not found in palaces. God's people are found where they give something of themselves in helping those less fortunate than themselves."



STUDENT BOOKS

- Take from your Student's Book "Encountering and Receiving Jesus in Our Hearts."
 - What do the different parts of this picture tell us about Jesus? (He comes to everyone.)
 - How does the quotation help explain the picture?
- Turn the page to the word search "God's Revelation."
 - Are there any words there you do not understand?
 - You may do the word search at home.



ACTIVITY

- Today is a good day to do something to show the lonely and sick that we care for them, even though we may not know them. We will make and send them Christmas greetings.
- I have here colored construction paper, old Christmas cards, white plain paper, and some black pens. Take one of each.
- Fold the construction paper in half and then in half again.
- Cut out a picture from an old Christmas card and glue it onto the front cover of your card.
- Write a message on the front cover and another one inside the card based on any one of the three Bible passages I have written on the blackboard. (Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20; Luke 4:18-19)
- Sign your card and put your grade level and our church's name on it.
- (Get a list of sick, shut-ins, and people in nursing homes from your church secretary or Director of Christian Education.) I have a list of people who

would enjoy receiving a card. Pick a name and put a check mark on it so that s/he will receive only one card from a member of this class.

- Write your person's name and address on this envelope.



CONCLUSION

- Let us form a prayer circle.

- Bring your Student's Page with you.

- Today we will say a prayer of Thanksgiving to God for Jesus and for those people who help teach us and keep us from being selfish. Who would like to start the prayer? We will add to the prayer. Then we will say the Lord's Prayer and sing *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*.

LESSON 14



THE SHOEMAKER MICHAEL PART II

Michael dreamed that Jesus was going to visit him the next day. He remembered a voice saying to him, “Michael, Michael, I am coming to visit with you tomorrow. Look for me.”

The next morning Michael got out of bed all excited. He did not know whether his dream would come true or not. But he was not going to take any chances. All day long he looked out of his shop window. It was now Advent. The townspeople were hurrying by with bundles in their arms. Everyone was preparing for their Christmas celebrations.

Michael found it hard to concentrate on his work. He kept looking out his window. Then he saw the town’s bag lady lean up against the wall of his shop to keep warm from the cold wind. He knew this woman. In fact, she was a friend of his dead wife. She had lost her way in life when she took to heavy drinking. Nothing her friends or family said or did could stop her from drinking.

Michael tapped on the window. She looked at him and was surprised that he was motioning for her to come in. He went to the door and said, “Hazel, come in. It’s cold out there. Let me fix you a cup of tea to warm you.”

Hazel was surprised at Michael’s kindness. She said, “Why Michael, I would love to come in. It is cold out here.”

Once inside Michael’s shop and over a cup of tea, the two of them began to talk.

“Michael, how have you been since your wife died?” she asked.

“Not well, not well—at least as far as my spirit is concerned. I have had a running argument with God. I blame God for the deaths of my wife and children. But now I am not so sure I was right in blaming God. And you, Hazel. What has been happening to you?”

“Oh, nothing really new. I still live for my drink and nothing else. My family has disowned me. And I am drinking myself into my grave. Oh, how I wish I could live my life over again! I would never, never touch alcohol. If there is a devil in this world, it is demon rum. It has ruined my life. It killed your beautiful daughter, and it has made me its slave. There should be a law against alcohol and drugs.”

Michael replied, “You know that laws will not keep you from doing what you ought not to do. You know that. It is the giving in to temptation that enslaves us.”

“I suppose you are right. But still I am a slave to the bottle. Well, Michael, I must be off. Thank you for your kindness. No one really talks to me these days. I needed a kind word today. Thank you! Take care of yourself and do not give in to despair. You are not a slave like I am. You can do something with what is left of your life. Merry Christmas, Michael.”

“Merry Christmas, Hazel.”

Michael cleaned the teacups and went about his work. But he spent a lot of time looking out his window.

A few hours later, Michael saw a young mother carrying a baby. Neither had sufficient clothing on to protect them from the cold wind. Michael tapped on his window and then went to the door and asked the young woman to come in and warm herself.

She gladly came in. Once she was inside, Michael asked, “My dear, why are you out in the cold without proper clothes on? Your baby could die!”

“I know! I know! I had to sell my coat this morning so that I could raise enough money for a bus ticket home. But still it is not enough. I don’t know what I am going to do.”

Then the young woman began to cry.

Michael said, “Now don’t cry, my child. Nothing is ever that bad. I have an old coat here that belonged to my wife. Let me get it out for you. It is old, but it will keep you warm. And I have an extra blanket you can wrap your baby in. Let me fix you a bowl of soup and some toast. Then you can tell me what your problem is.”

When they sat down to eat, the young woman told Michael her story. “I got married a couple of years ago when my husband joined the Navy. He was sent out on a secret mission about three months ago, and I have not heard from him since. I did housekeeping in the hotel. But since the baby was born, they do not want me; and they no longer give me my free room. I need to go home, but my parents do not have any money to give me. You see, my husband and I come from a small town in northern California. I can’t get employment here. No one wants me with the baby. If I go home, my husband will be able to find me when he comes ashore. I will be with my family, and my mother can take care of the baby while I work. But I have no more to sell and not enough money for the trip. I don’t know what to do.”

“My dear, I have no one but myself. If my daughter were alive and had your problem, I would hope that someone would help her. Let me help you and your baby. Let me give you the money to get home. Someday, when you are earning money and have some to spare, you can return it to me or give it to someone in need. At least, I will know you and your baby will get home safely. I will call and make a plane reservation for you right away. Then I will call the airport taxi to pick you up. Here is some more money to get you and the baby from the airport to your home town. Here is my address. Write me when you get home to let me know that you arrived home safely.”

The young woman began to cry. “You are a very good, kind person. I am so glad that God led me to you.”

After all reservations had been made and the taxi arrived, the woman thanked Michael and left. Michael cleaned the dishes and looked anxiously out of the window. There were only two more hours of sunlight left. Was Jesus really going to visit him today or had it all been a dream?

Michael began to work again. An hour later, there was a lot of commotion on the street. Michael looked up and saw old Mrs. Riley pulling on the hair of a young boy in tattered clothes. Michael went out of his shop and asked, “What’s going on here? Let go of this boy’s hair.”

“He tried to steal an apple from my grocery bag, which I pull along in this cart,” said Mrs. Riley. “See—the apple is in his hand. I caught him red-handed. I am going to teach him a lesson and take him to the police.”

“Mrs. Riley, let go of him. He won’t do it again.”

The boy began to cry and said he was sorry.

“That’s right,” said Michael. “You will not do it again. That’s stealing and it is wrong to steal.”

“Michael, you are spoiling him. He ought to be whipped and spend the night in a juvenile detention center. Then he will learn not to steal.”

“Mrs. Riley, Mrs. Riley, you are wrong. That is our way but not God’s way. We are to forgive those who do us wrong and especially a child like this boy.”

“You are right, Michael. But how will they ever learn? Children do whatever they want these days.”

“Then, I guess we old ones will have to show them a better way,” said Michael.

Old Mrs. Riley began to pull her cart to go home. The boy asked, “Mrs. Riley, let me pull that cart for you. I am going your way.”

Mrs. Riley agreed and they both went on their way, talking to each other.

Michael returned to his shop and finished the shoe on which he was working. Then he cleaned up his work area and sat down to read the Bible passage from Luke. As Michael opened the Bible, his dream from the night before came back to him. He heard a voice call to him, “Michael, Michael, don’t you know me?” Then Michael heard footsteps in the corner of his shop. He looked over and for a brief moment saw Hazel, the bag lady, step out and say, “It is I.” Then she faded away.

From another corner came a voice saying, “Michael, Michael, don’t you know me? It is I.” Michael turned and saw the young woman with the baby. The baby laughed, and then they were seen no more.

From another corner of his shop came the words, “It is I.” Michael turned and saw Mrs. Riley and the boy. No sooner had he seen them, then they vanished.

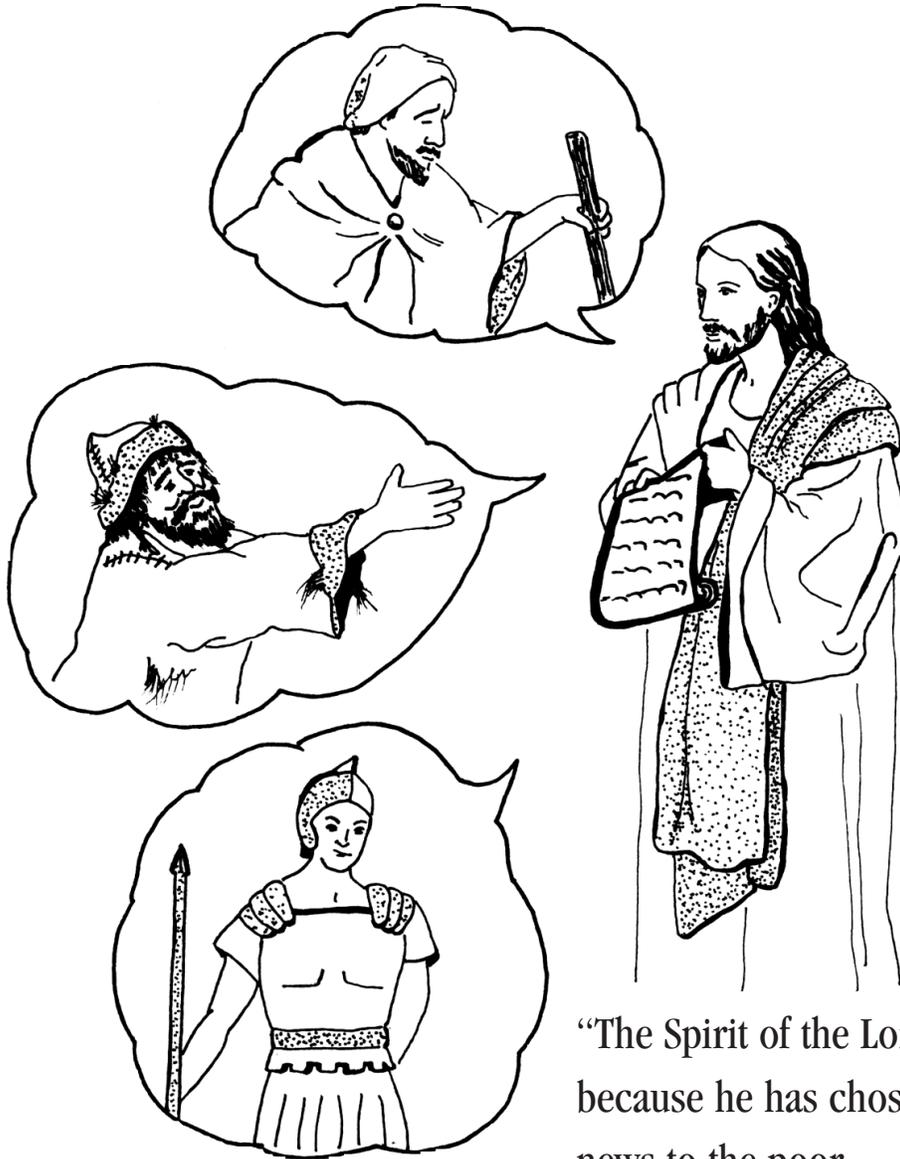
Michael was filled with joy. He then turned to the Bible. The Bible opened to a new passage. His eyes read these words, “I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your home, naked and you clothed me. . . . I tell you whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me” (Matthew 25:35, 40).

Then Michael understood. The Lord Jesus did visit him this day.

End of Teacher Book Preview.

Student Book Preview Follows.

Encountering and Receiving Jesus in Our Hearts



“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.”

Luke 4:18-19

GOD'S REVELATION



CAPTIVE	SHADOW
LIBERTY	PEACE
SIGHT	KINGDOM
JESUS	RIGHT
MANGER	JUSTICE
SHEPHERDS	MARY
OPPRESSED	JOSEPH
LIGHT	

W O D A H S H O A R A H P N
 R U P N K I N G D O M Q P C
 E P K D E S S E R P P O K M
 S N U M I N S T E R Y I Y O
 D H J A P L I B E R T Y B D
 R S U S E J V R J K L E B A
 E L S A I F I I U P Z C H F
 H S T S R G R E G N A M P P
 P D I B H G H T R P C P E N
 E P C T A D N T T A E X S N
 H J E P V B H I Q A I F O G
 S I G H T G V I C J D Q J A
 U X G A I E L E M A R Y W L
 F H V L C R E A T I O N Z Y

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here
 Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
 Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
 From depths of hell thy people save,
 And give them victory o'er the grave.

Refrain

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
 Our spirits by thine advent here;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Refrain

O come, thou Key of David, come,
 And open wide our heav'nly home;
 Make safe the way that leads on high,
 And close the path to misery.

Refrain



A Note Home:

Today your child learned about the birth of Jesus in a stable, about the announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds and their arrival in the stable; they heard the conclusion to "The Shoemaker Michael," which offered clues on how Jesus comes to us today. Scripture references were Luke 2:1-20 and 4:18-19.