

These factual accounts of the Nativity will give you the answers to many questions, and if you are not used to reading the Bible regularly it will show you a simple way to start

Choose a convenient time – for example at teatime, at the end of the meal with all family present

WEEK ONE:

Day 1 Read St Matthew's Gospel chapter 1 – don't worry if you struggle in pronouncing all the names. It has 25 verses so should take around 5 minutes if read aloud at the same speed it is read at mass.

Day 2 Read St Matthew's Gospel chapter 2. It only has 23 verses.

Day 3 Read chapter 1 again - this time beginning to focus on all those unusual names in the genealogy

Day 4 Read chapter 2 again - noting the age of the children involved in Herod's reaction

Day 5 Read chapter 1 again - this time noticing the 5 women mentioned

Day 6 Read chapter 2 again – notice the surprising word in verse 11. Did you spot it the first 2 times you read this chapter?

Day 7 Either read both chapters together or if you are interested then use www.biblegateway.com to find out more information. Use the "search" box and type in the name, and in the box next to it where you can choose the translation used - click on the arrow and choose "New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)" as this is the version used in "Year of the Word: The God Who Speaks", then click "Search". So find out more about Tamar or Rahab or Ruth or the wife of "Uriah".

WEEK TWO:

Day 1 Read St Luke's Gospel chapter one. It has 80 verses compared to 25 verses in St Matthew's Gospel so will take longer to read

Day 2 Read St Luke's gospel chapter two. It has 52 verses.

Day 3 Read chapter one again – note in verse 1 that St Luke does not say "happened" or "occurred". What word does he use? Focus on Mary's song "The Magnificat".

Day 4 Read chapter 2 again – note verse 24 and read Leviticus chapter 12 verses 1-8 (note verse 8) – Leviticus is the 3rd book of the Old Testament

Day 5 Read chapter one again – focus on Zechariah's prophecy.

Day 6 Read chapter two again – note Simeon's song (often called the "Nunc Dimitis" after the Latin for the opening few words).

Day 7 Either read both chapters together or if you are interested then use www.biblegateway.com to find out more information. Have a look at Colossians chapter 4 verse 14 to see Luke's occupation.

Review your Christmas Quiz answers to see if you want to change any, having now read St Matthew and St Luke's accounts. The other answers will appear on the church website in the next few weeks.