***Christmas Show 2022…Best Christmas Pageant Ever***

***Audition***s BCPE

\*Sunday Aug. 14th 3:00-9:00

\*Monday, Aug. 15th 5:00-9:00

**\*Sunday Sept. 11th** BCPE… **Parent/Cast Meeting 2:00-3:00**

**September:**

Sunday 18th 2:00-5:30

Sunday 25th 2:00-5:00

**October:**

\*\*Monday 3rd 5:00-9:00

\*\*Monday 10th 5:00-9:00

Wednesday 26th 5:00-9:00

Sunday 30th 3:00-9:00

**November:**

Wednesday 2nd 5:00-9:00

Sunday 6th 3:00-9:00

Monday 7th 5:00-9:00

Wednesday 9th 5:00-9:00

Sunday 13th 3:00-9:00

Monday 14th 5:00-9:00

Wednesday 16th 5:00-9:00

Sunday 20th 3:00-9:00

***TECH:***

Sunday 27th 2:00-9:00

Monday 28th 5:00-9:00

Tuesday 29th 5:00-9:00

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday Dec. 1st 7:00

Friday Dec. 2nd 7:00

Saturday Dec. 3rd 7:00

Sunday Dec. 4th 3:00

Thursday Dec. 8th 7:00

Friday Dec. 9th 7:00

Saturday 10th 7:00

Sunday 11th 3:00pm

\*=Details of Dates changed \*\*=Dates Added

Mom, Dad

In the Pageant: 8 angels, 4 shepherds, Mary, Joseph, Angel of the Lord, Narrator, 3 wise men (Leroy, brings ham)

8 adult supporting roles

**CHARACTERS:**

**CHILDRENS ROLES: (Ages are estimated to fit script)**

[**Imogene Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20488/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/imogene-herdman) **Female 11-15**

APPEARS TO BE 11 - 12, Standard American accent. Imogene is a member of the notorious Herdman family, young delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. Imogene is an aggressive and confident girl, very self-possessed. She hangs out in the ladies’ room, smoking cigarettes, in order to unwind. Although she is the second oldest, she seems to take a leadership role amongst her siblings, and bosses them around for purposes of family harmony. Imogene has a crafty and malicious streak, and enjoys intimidating others in order to get what she wants. She is also smart, creative, and surprisingly emotional, with a great capacity for feeling. When the Herdman children join a Sunday School in time to get involved in the annual Christmas pageant, Imogene only volunteers because she hears that the role of Mary is important, and wants to take that role away from prim and prissy Alice Wendleken. She organizes her siblings to take the other leading roles, effectively taking over the pageant, and beginning a reign of terror over the church for the month of December. Imogene misbehaves as much as usual, but also finds herself getting drawn into the Christmas story, and expresses concern that Child Welfare is not there to help the Holy Family move out of the barn. The Herdman family is deeply poor, with a missing father and a mother working a minimum wage factory job, and Imogene ends up identifying deeply with Mary. To everyone’s surprise, she gives a performance of sincere dignity and grace, complete with real tears.

[**Beth Bradley**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20483/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/beth-bradley) **Female 9-15ish**

APPEARS TO BE 10-11, Standard American accent. Beth Bradley is a smart, observant girl, a natural storyteller, who watches the turmoil that results when her church’s annual Christmas pageant is invaded by the Herdmans, the meanest and most delinquent kids in town. Beth does not have a loud or pushy personality, but she is a strong character, an intelligent and honest observer of people in her community. She is not afraid to argue with her friend Alice when she doesn’t share her opinion, or when Alice is saying mean things about her mother, who is thrust into the role of pageant director when the usual director breaks her leg. Beth is a loving daughter, an annoyed big sister, and a grounding influence on those around her. She is a good listener, and an articulate speaker. Beth initially shares the widely held opinion that the six Herdman children are just plain terrible, with no excuse for their bullying, mischief, and aggression. But being a loyal daughter, she tries to defend Mrs. Bradley’s pageant, in which they are the stars, and eventually, by listening to her parents, and closely observing how the Herdmans interact with the story of Christmas, comes to an understanding that their behavior and appearance might not be entirely their fault, but be a product of poverty and neglect. Beth is in many ways an “every girl”, a relatable window into the story, and she is also an unusually thoughtful person, who grows in sensitivity over the course of the play. As a narrator, the role of Beth Bradley has a large line load, and calls for a mature and self-possessed young actor with strong stage presence.

[**Charlie Bradley**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20486/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/charlie-bradley) **Male 8-13ish**

APPEARS TO BE 8-9, Standard American accent. Charlie Bradley is a young boy who is annoyed at having to participate in his church’s Christmas pageant, especially after his mother takes over as director, and the Herdmans, the meanest kids in town, take over all the leading roles. Charlie is described as a ”traditional kid brother” type. He is an energetic boy with a pessimistic streak, who enjoys annoying his sister Beth. Charlie is outspoken and matter-of-fact, confident with his opinions. He is blunt and truthful. When everyone else says that they like Sunday School best because of God and Jesus, Charlie is the only one practical enough to say that he likes it best because there are no Herdmans. He is frequently bullied by the Herdman boys, who pinch him in class and steal his lunch. Charlie’s mistake is to brag to Leroy Herdman that he doesn’t mind a stolen dessert, because they serve enough free ones at Sunday school, which causes the Herdmans to come to Sunday School and get involved in the pageant… so really, Charlie is his own worst enemy. He is a gloomy, funny, appealing little boy.

[**Ralph Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20487/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/ralph-herdman) **Male 12-16ish**

APPEARS TO BE 12-13, Standard American accent. Ralph is a member of the notorious Herdman family, young delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. The eldest and only teenager, he represents a more laid-back kind of aggression, and has a slouching, careless, “too cool” demeanor. He doesn’t talk too much, but oozes attitude. Ralph might have less mischief in his personality than his little brothers, and more menace, befitting the man he will soon become. He should look capable of all sorts of violence, if only he had the energy, or cared enough, The Herdmans live in extreme poverty, with a missing father, and a mother making minimum wage at a factory job. The welfare workers visit often, and Ralph does not have much opportunity to learn manners, but when Ralph ends up participating in a Sunday School Christmas pageant, he makes a subdued and dignified Joseph.

[**Leroy Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20489/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/leroy-herdman) **Male 9-13ish**

APPEARS TO BE 10 - 11, Standard American accent. Leroy is a member of the notorious Herdman family, young delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. He is tough and confident, something of a bully, known for punching his classmates and stealing their lunches. It is Leroy who leads the Herdman children to Sunday School, and subsequently to the Christmas pageant, after Charlie Bradley brags to him that there is free dessert in Sunday School. Leroy has a sweet tooth, and a growing boy’s fondness for sugar. He is frequently confused by the Christmas story, and eagerly approves of the idea to turn it into an action-adventure flick in which “all the Shepherds beat up Herod.” He is companionably quarrelsome with brothers Claude and Ollie, and the three boys frequently wrestle each other. Leroy is ultimately dignified and sincere in his performance as a Wise Man, and brings the generous gift of a ham from his family’s welfare basket as a gift for the baby Jesus.

[**Claude Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20490/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/claude-herdman) **Male 8-12ish**

APPREARS TO BE 9 - 10, Standard American accent. Claude is a member of the notorious Herdman family, young delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. He is described as tough and combative, an aggressive and mischievous boy with a surly streak. He doesn’t talk too much. Claude is closest in age to his brother Ollie, and the two boys act as partners in crime. The Herdman family lives in poverty, with a missing father, a mother who works double shifts in a factory, and frequent visits from the social worker. This atmosphere does not allow for anyone to develop refined manners. But when the children participate in the Sunday School Christmas pageant, Claude becomes a dignified and generous Wise Man.

[**Ollie Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20491/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/ollie-herdman) **Male 7-11ish**

APPREARS TO BE 8 - 9, Standard American accent. Ollie is is a member of the notorious Herdman family, young delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. Ollie is described as “looking for trouble”, he is a tough boy with an aggressive sense of mischief. He is closest in age to his brother Claude, and the two boys act as partners in crime. Ollie is slightly louder and more encouraging than Claude, but the two boys are very similarly written. The Herdman family lives in poverty, with a missing father, a mother who works double shifts in a factory, and frequent visits from the social worker. This atmosphere does not allow for anyone to develop refined manners. But when the children participate in the Sunday School Christmas pageant, Ollie becomes a dignified and generous Wise Man.

[**Gladys Herdman**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20492/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/gladys-herdman) **Female 6-10ish**

APPEARS TO BE 7 - 8, Standard American accent. Gladys is the youngest of the notorious Herdman children, a family of delinquents who steal, cheat, bully their classmates, and generally terrorize the neighborhood. Though small, Gladys is especially scrappy and tough, known and feared on the playground for hitting really hard. She has a forceful personality, and is both energetic and creative, a great storyteller. She is a big fan of superhero comics and, when cast as the Angel of the Lord in the Christmas pageant, decides that her role of the angel should be both more helpful, and more like a vengeful superhero, and that the whole Christmas story itself is probably a “spy caper.” The Herdmans have been left by their father, their mother works two shifts a day at the factory, and they are visited frequently by welfare workers. Gladys slept in a bureau drawer as a baby, when there were not enough beds to go around, and her brothers refused to share. Though her life experiences have been grim, Gladys ultimately channels her anger into an energetic, angelic performance. The role of Gladys calls for a forceful young actor, fierce and charismatic, who is not afraid to be loud and strong.

[**Elmer Hopkins**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20500/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/elmer-hopkins) **Male 11-15ish**

12 -13, Standard American accent. Elmer Hopkins, as the son of a minister, has been involved in his church’s Christmas pageant for his entire life, and has been repeatedly cast as Joseph. He is very tired of this responsibility, and tries to bribe the other boys in his Sunday school, giving out the rumor that he will pay a dollar to anyone who volunteers in his place. He is relieved when menacing adolescent Ralph Herdman wins the role of Joseph, but less pleased when Ralph’s tough little sister Gladys is cast as the Angel of the Lord, because her tendency to hit people means that Elmer would rather not risk being a shepherd. Elmer is practical, curious, and occasionally fearful, with a strong instinct for self-preservation

[**Beverly**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20503/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/beverly) **Female 6-15ish**

Standard American accent. Beverly is a child who is eager to volunteer for her Sunday school Christmas pageant. However, she loses her chance for a main role when she lets the Herdmans -- the meanest kids in town -- into the auditions, and they scare her away merely, they claim, by saying “hello, Beverly.” Beverly probably ends up as a shepherd, or in the angel chorus. If she is an angel, she should be comfortable singing on stage.

[**Shirley**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20505/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/shirley) **Female 5-9ish**

APPEARS YOUNG AROUND 5 - 6, Standard American accent. Shirley is performing as a baby angel in her church’s Christmas pageant. She fails to wear her costume to the dress rehearsal, because she can’t find her halo, and her mother has no white sheets -- Shirley wonders if an angel costume with balloons would work just as well. Shirley might be shy about being onstage, as the baby angels have to be pushed onstage, unwillingly, when their turn comes to perform.

[**Juanita**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20506/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/juanita) **Female 5-9ish**

APPEARS YOUNG AROUND 5 - 6, Standard American accent. Juanita is performing as a baby angel in her church’s Christmas pageant. She fails to wear her costume to the dress rehearsal, with the excuse that her “wings got all bent.” Juanita might be shy about being onstage, as the baby angels have to be pushed onstage, unwillingly, when their turn comes to perform.

[**Doris**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20507/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/doris) **Female 9-12ish**

9 - 10, Standard American accent. Doris is a child who is performing in her church’s Christmas pageant as a member of the angel choir. She fails to wear her costume to the dress rehearsal, with the excuse that someone else took it away. She might try to play dress up and put on lipstick and high heels, however, due to the thrill of being onstage. Doris should be comfortable singing onstage.

[**Alice Wendleken**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20493/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/alice-wendleken) **Female 10-15ish**

Standard American accent. Alice Wendleken is a child who is heavily involved in her church, and has won the role of Mary in the annual Christmas pageant for several years running. She is somewhat prim and proper, self-righteously virtuous and stuck-up about her status as the Holy Mother. Alice is smart and talented, but over-confident. However, when the horrible Herdman children take over the Christmas pageant, she loses the role of Mary to bossy, crafty Imogene Herdman, who threatens her into silence when it comes time to volunteer. Alice is disappointed, frightened, and angry at having “her” role taken away, and reacts with bitterness. A “tattletale”, she keeps a journal of the Herdman’s misdeeds for her mother, the Reverend, and the Ladies Aid Society, and annoys her friend Beth with prissy comments and mean jokes. Alice is confident, dramatic, snooty, and a good speaker, a kinder, gentler “mean girl”, and great young character role.

[**Maxine**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20499/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/maxine) **Female 9-13ish**

10 - 11, Standard American accent. Maxine is a child who is involved in her church’s annual Christmas pageant. She is a responsible and hard-working person, who seems to act as stage manager, stagehand, and narrator all at once, proving herself very helpful to first-time pageant director Grace Bradley. Maxine is very literal-minded, taking the saying “there are no small parts, only small actors” to mean something like “make sure the baby angels are standing in front.” As narrator, Maxine has the bulk of the actual “pageant” dialogue, and should have a strong and clear speaking voice.

[**Hobie**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20501/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/hobie) **Male 8-11ish**

9 - 10, Standard American accent. Hobie is a child who is involved in his church’s annual Christmas pageant. He does not want to be a shepherd, because Gladys Herdman, who is playing the Angel of the Lord, hits too hard. Hobie tries to give the excuse that his family is going to Philadelphia to get out of being in the pageant, a fact which he had conveniently forgotten -- but as he ends up in the pageant, his family may or may not have actually traveled.

[**David**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20502/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/david) **Male 8-11ish**

8 - 9, Standard American accent. David is a child who is involved in his church’s Christmas pageant, as a performer. His mother didn’t want him to be a shepherd, but he may in fact have ended up as a shepherd. David is very helpful, volunteering his four year old brother as the baby Jesus, because “he’s double-jointed and he could probably scrunch up.” David is generous, matter-of-fact, and eager to help.

[**Mother (Grace Bradley)**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20484/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mother-grace-bradley) **Female Teen playing up or Adult**

Mid 30s, Standard American accent. Grace Bradley -- most often known as Mother or Mrs. Bradley -- is a warm and loving wife and mother. She is unexpectedly saddled with the responsibility of directing her church’s annual Christmas pageant after Mrs. Armstrong, the usual director, breaks her leg. Mrs. Bradley is not a weak person, but she is kind, sweet-natured, and has a difficult time say “no” to anyone, from the Ladies’ Aid Society, who pressure her into accepting the job, or the six frightening Herdman children, who storm the Christmas pageant casting meeting and end up with all the leading roles. No one is brave enough to deny the intimidating Herdmans, and Mrs. Bradley is no exception. When the other ladies scold and gossip behind her back for ruining the pageant, Mrs. Bradley becomes angry, and determined to make it the “best Christmas pageant ever”, in spite of her lack of experience and volatile cast. She is overwhelmed and annoyed by pushy Mrs. Armstrong’s micro-manager advice, but does benefit from many of the details. Mrs. Bradley often presents a flustered, overwhelmed demeanor as she tries to herd a huge crowd of confused, hyper, or deliberately chaotic children into some semblance of dignified performance, but she ultimately blossoms under the pressure, rising to the challenge and creating a coherent and beautiful Christmas story, with the help of the misunderstood Herdmans. She is a genuine and respectful presence for the children, who does try to organize and “mother” them, but never talks down to anyone. She is a warm, human presence.

[**Father (Bob Bradley)**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20485/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/father-bob-bradley) **Male Teen Playing up or Adult**

Late 30s, Standard American accent. Mr. Bradley is a warm and loving husband and father. He is prepared to be mildly annoyed when his church’s annual Christmas pageant looms, and he will be forced to endure it’s usual boredom. But when his wife unexpectedly finds herself the first-time director of the pageant, after the usual director breaks a leg, Mr. Bradley is roped into being an active, helpful member of the stage crew. He is extremely reluctant to get so involved, and irate at finding his life taken over with the Ladies’ Aid drama and juvenile mischief which results, but does not hesitate to support his wife during her tumultuous directorial experience. Mr. Bradley is cranky and funny in a traditional ‘sitcom dad’ kind of way, but has a thoughtful and sensitive side, and teaches his daughter Beth the importance of kindness and understanding when he compares the raggedy, grubby Herdman family, the children who have the leading roles in the pageant, to the real Holy Family, who were dirty and hungry, like refugees, when they came to Bethlehem.

[**Mrs. Armstrong**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20494/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-armstrong) **Female flexible age**

50s, Standard American accent. Mrs. Armstrong is a strong-minded, take charge kind of woman, heavily involved in her church and community, and a leading figure in the Ladies’ Aid Society. She is sociable and incredibly talkative. Mrs. Armstrong should be intimidating, but not at all malicious, She is bossy and effortlessly managerial, but a truly talented and caring project manager, who skillfully, if not necessarily with inspiration, holds together such holiday events as the potluck supper, the bazaar, and the Christmas pageant. Unfortunately, when she breaks a leg, Mrs. Armstrong finds herself helplessly confined to her hospital bed, and forced to delegate her important responsibilities. When inexperienced Grace Bradley takes over the Christmas pageant, Mrs. Armstrong gives her the benefit of her years of practical experience, but discovers, via the rumor mill, that the pageant is falling apart. Mrs. Armstrong is not the best invalid -- incredibly frustrated at her enforced helplessness, she would direct the pageant by phone, if she could.

[**Mrs. McCarthy**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20498/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-mccarthy) **Female flexible age**

40s, Standard American accent. Mrs. McCarthy is a “church lady”, member of the Ladies’ Aid Society, and all-around busy neighborhood matron. She is described as a younger, milder, version of the take-charge, project managing Mrs. Armstrong, and she has a busybody demeanor. She can come across across as stuffy, as she favors extremely proper behavior, is a little bossy, and is easily horrified at any commotion. Mrs. McCarthy is unwilling to take on the church Christmas Pageant when director Mrs. Armstrong breaks her leg, but she spends much time on the phone with her friends disapproving of first-time director Grace Bradley’s managerial style, and giving her unasked for opinions whenever she sees the Bradleys. When the horrible Herdman children end up with all the leading roles, she opines that “they ought to be in jail!” But she is ultimately softened and won over by the Herdman children’s sincere and energetic performances, and gives her congratulations to Grace Bradley.

[**Mrs. Slocum**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20495/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-slocum) **Female flexible age**

30s - 60s, Standard American accent. 30s - 60s, Mrs. Slocum is a “church lady”, heavily involved in the Ladies’ Aid Society and active in her community. She is a bit of a gossip and busybody, but described as essentially pleasant and motherly. When managerial Mrs. Armstrong, committee head extraordinaire and director of the Christmas pageant, breaks her leg, Mrs. Slocum is shocked and appalled at the way the pageant seems to crumble, as the job is thrust upon inexperienced Grace Bradley, and the notoriously wild Herdman children take over the leading roles. When she hears that tough, crafty Imogene Herdman is going to play Mary, Mrs. Slocum refuses to allow baby Eugene Slocum (not defined in the text, but actor’s choice of son, grandson, nephew) to play baby Jesus. Mrs. Slocum spends a lot of her time on the phone with her friends, predicting doom for the whole endeavor, but is pleasantly surprised by the pageant, in the end.

[**Mrs. Clark**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20496/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-clark) **Female flexible age**

30s - 60s, Standard American accent. Mrs Clark is a “church lady”, heavily involved in the Ladies’ Aid Society and active in her community. She is a bit of a gossip and busybody, but described as essentially pleasant and motherly. When managerial Mrs. Armstrong, committee head extraordinaire and director of the Christmas pageant, breaks her leg, Mrs. Clark refuses to take on the pageant, due to her social obligations, but she is horrified to notice the famously awful Herdman children take over the lead roles, and appear to run rings around inexperienced pageant director Grace Bradley. Mrs. Clark spends a lot of her time on the phone with her friends, predicting doom for the whole endeavor, but is pleasantly surprised by the pageant, in the end.

[**Mrs. Clausing**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20497/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-clausing) **Female flexible age**

30s - 60s, Standard American accent. Mrs. Clausing is a “church lady”, heavily involved in the Ladies’ Aid Society and active in her community. She is a bit of a gossip and busybody, but described as essentially pleasant and motherly. When managerial Mrs. Armstrong, committee head extraordinaire and director of the Christmas pageant, breaks her leg, Mrs. Clausing is shocked and appalled at the way the pageant seems to crumble, as the job is thrust upon inexperienced Grace Bradley, and the notoriously wild Herdman children take over the leading roles. Mrs. Clausing spends a lot of her time on the phone with her friends, predicting doom for the whole endeavor, but is pleasantly surprised by the pageant, in the end.

[**Reverend Hopkins**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20508/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/reverend-hopkins) **Male flexible age**

40s, Standard American accent. Reverend Hopkins is the minister, dealing with a Christmas pageant at his church which has been invaded by the most unruly group of children in the neighborhood. Faced with an angry congregation, he voices his concerns, remarking that “when Jesus said “suffer the little children to come unto me”, I’m not sure he meant the Herdmans…”. This less-than-welcoming attitude might also be because his son Elmer, who usually plays Joseph, was almost literally beat out for the role by menacing adolescent Ralph Herdman. Reverend Hopkins can be played as something of a snob, or pleasant, anxious, and concerned adult faced with uncertain youthful antics.

[**Angel Choir, Baby Angels, Shepherds**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20509/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/angel-choir-baby-angels-shepherds)**: E**ither Gender, Ensemble, Treble/Boy Sop

[**Firemen (2)**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20504/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/firemen-2)Male

[**Beth Bradley**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20483/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/beth-bradley) **Monologue**

It did seem real, as if it might have happened just that way. We all thought the pageant was about Jesus, but that was only part of it. It was about a new baby, and his mother and father who were in a whole lot of trouble -- no money, no place to go, no doctor, nobody they knew. And then, arriving from the East -- like my uncle from New Jersey -- some rich friends. Because of the Herdmans it was a whole new story -- Imogene, burping the baby, and the Wise Men bringing such a sensible present. After all, they couldn’t eat Frankincense! And even Gladys -- “He’s in the barn. Go see him” … so the shepherds didn’t have to stumble around all over the countryside. But I guess it wasn’t like that for Imogene. For her, the Christmas present turned out to be all wonder and mystery, as if she just caught on to what Christmas was all about. When it was over we had a party in the basement, but the Herdmans didn’t stay. They didn’t have any cocoa and they didn’t walk off with all the cookies, and they wouldn’t even take their candy canes.

[**Alice Wendleken**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20493/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/alice-wendleken) **Monologue**

I didn’t dare raise my hand. Imogene would have killed me! She said, “I’m going to be Mary in this play, and if you open your mouth or raise your hand you’ll wish you didn’t.” And I said, “I’m always Mary in the Christmas pageant.” And she said, “Go ahead then, and next spring when the pussywillows come out I’ll stick a pussywillow so far down your ear that nobody can reach it… and it’ll sprout there and grow and grow, and you’ll spend the rest of your life with a pussywillow bush growing out of your ear!”

[**Mrs. Armstrong**](https://stageagent.com/characters/20494/the-best-christmas-pageant-ever/mrs-armstrong) **Monologue**

[Let me]tell you again, Grace, how important it is to give everyone a chance. Here’s what I do -- I always start with Mary and tell them we must choose our Mary carefully because Mary was the mother of Jesus… Yes, and then I tell them about Joseph, that he was God’s choice to be Jesus’ father. That’s how I explain that. Frankly, I don’t ever spend much time on Joseph because it’s always Elmer Hopkins, and he knows all about Mary and Joseph, but I do explain about the Wise Men and the shepherds and how important they are. And I tell them, there are no small parts, only small actors. Remind the angel choir not to stare at the audience, and don’t let them wear earrings and things like that. And don’t let them wear clunky shoes or high heels. I just hope you don’t have too many baby angels, Grace, because they’ll be your biggest problem. You’ll have to get someone to push the baby angels on, otherwise they get in each other’s way and bend their wings. Bob could do that, and he could keep an eye on the shepherds too. Oh, another thing about the angel choir. Don’t let them wear lipstick. They think because it’s a play that they have to wear lipstick, and it looks terrible. So tell them…. And, Grace, don’t use just anybody’s baby for Jesus… get a quiet one. Better yet, get two if you can… then if one turns out to be fussy, you can always switch them.