Kids' Chronicle

Mary is blessed by God

BY JOE SARNICOLA

In the town of Nazareth, in the region of Galilee, there lived a young woman named Mary who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.

As was her custom, Mary prayed every night for the Lord's blessing on her household. When she prayed one night, something special happened.

The clouds outside blotted out most of the light from the moon and stars, and the only light in Mary's room came from a small oil lamp. The room became filled with a bright light and the figure of a beautiful angel appeared in the middle of it.

"I am Gabriel. I bring you a message of peace from God," the angel said. "He has heard your prayer and will bring a blessing like no other to you."

Mary could not hide her fright at seeing the angel.

"What do you mean?" she asked. "What does the Lord wish from me?"

"There is no need to be afraid of anything," the angel said. "You will bear a son whose name will be Jesus. He will be the son of God, a king, a descendant of David."

"How is this possible?" she asked. "I am not yet married to Joseph."

The angel answered, "The spirit of God will visit you and you will feel the power of his love. Even your relative, Elizabeth, is now with child, although she is now old and believed unable to bear children. God can do all things."

Then Mary said to the angel, "If this is the will of God, let it take place as he has determined it to be."

The angel immediately disappeared and Mary was alone in the dim light of

the oil lamp once more.

"My God," she prayed, "I am unworthy of this great honor, but I thank you for choosing me. I will visit Elizabeth in the morning and we will rejoice about our good fortune together."

As the first light of morning was brightening the sky over Nazareth, Mary was dressed and on her way to Judea to see Elizabeth. Mary found Elizabeth just as the angel had described.

"My dear Elizabeth," Mary said, "God has blessed us as only he could."

Illustration by Linda Rivers

"Sweet Mary," Elizabeth answered. "At the sound of your voice, the child I carry has leaped for joy. You are blessed over all of us, and the child you will bring into the world will bless and be blessed. How wonderful you are because this has happened to you."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Luke 1

Q&A

1. What was the name of the angel who visited Mary?

2. What happened when Elizabeth's baby heard Mary's voice?

Bible Accent

Matthew's Gospel lists the genealogical history between David and Jesus.

According to these records, Joseph was a direct descendant of David. Other records indicate that Mary was from the tribe of Judah and that she was also a descendant of David. Mary was also related to Elizabeth, who was the mother of John the Baptist.
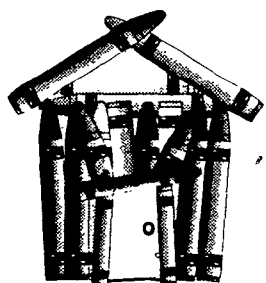
Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of his only son, Jesus. Jesus was not born in the luxury of a palace, but in the stable behind an inn, hardly the place anyone expected the promised messiah to be born.

St. John of the Cross

St. John of the Cross was born in 1542, the son of a weaver, who died when St. John was young. His mother raised her three children in near poverty. St. John was forced to work in a hospital to try to help feed the family. He was able to attend a Jesuit college and became first a Carmelite friar and eventually an ordained priest.

A division developed within the Carmelites and St. John was ordered to give up the position he held as spiritual director of a convent. He would not resign and was taken out by force, beaten and thrown into a jail cell. He escaped and was able to remain free until the division of the order had been resolved by forming a new order.

St. John is recognized as a mystic, poet and scholar, and is honored as a doctor of the church. We remember him on Dec. 14.

Puzzle

Cross out the names of the people from the list who are not mentioned in the first chapter of Luke. *Answers on page 11*

1. Theophilus	2. Pilate	3. David	4. Zechariah
5. Mark	6. Mary	7. Herod	8. Elizabeth
9. Esther	10. Gabriel	11. Joshua	12. Simon