

Kids' Chronicle

Mary and Elizabeth

BY JOE SARNICOLA

Mary woke up to find her room filled with a bright light. Then an angel appeared and said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold you will bear a son, and his name will be Jesus. He will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Most High."

Mary could not believe what the angel was telling her. She was not yet married to Joseph, but the angel said she was going to have a son, a son who would also be the Son of the Most High. Then the angel told Mary of another miraculous birth that was to take place.

"Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age. Nothing will be impossible for God."

Elizabeth had wanted children all her life, yet she had no sons or daughters. Now the angel was saying that even though Elizabeth was old, she was going to have a baby. Mary hardly knew what to say to the angel. "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel disappeared and the first light of the morning sun could be seen coming into the window. Mary was so excited, she immediately set out to visit Elizabeth in

Judah.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's voice, she felt the child she was carrying leap for joy. Then she became filled with the Holy Spirit and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" The two women hugged each other.

Then Mary said, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. The mighty one has done great things for me, and holy is his name. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Three months later, Mary returned to her home. And Elizabeth had her baby, a son. When everyone wondered what the child's name would be, Zechariah, Elizabeth's husband, wrote on a tablet, "John is his name." Then he said to the boy, "And you, child, will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the



Lord to prepare his ways."

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Luke 1

Q&A

1. What was the angel's message to Mary?
2. What happened when Elizabeth heard Mary's voice?

Bible Accent

Mary is without a doubt the most important woman in the Bible and in our Christian heritage. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Mary is the model of a person of faith. When he made his announcement that she was to bear the son of God, the angel Gabriel addressed Mary as the "favored one," and told her, "The Lord is with you."

In John's Gospel, Mary persuades Jesus to perform his first miracle, which was to change water into wine at the wedding in Cana. When Jesus was on the cross, he told John to love and care for Mary as if she were his own mother. There are several church feast days dedicated to Mary, including the Annunciation, the Immaculate Conception and her Assumption into heaven.

St. Mary Di Rosa

Mary Di Rosa was born in Italy in 1813. Her father was a wealthy man, and her mother was a seamstress. When Mary (who was called Paula by her parents) was 11 years old, her mother died, and when she was 17, she had to leave school to help her father care for her eight brothers and sisters.

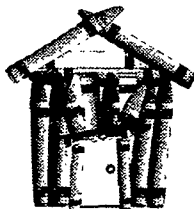
Although Mary's father wanted to help her find a suitable husband, she told him she chose to lead a single life devoted to helping unfortunate people, especially the girls who worked in the family's textile mill.

When a cholera epidemic broke out in the village of Brescia, Mary worked as a volunteer nurse at the hospital, along with another volunteer named Gabriela Ederio Bernabè. The two women were gentle and loving to the sick patients. Because of her work at the hospital, Mary was asked to manage an institution for poor girls. This institution was the foundation of what became the religious society called the Handmaids of Charity. We honor Mary on Dec. 15.

Puzzle

Answer the questions based on the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke. Answers on page 8.

1. I was king of Judea _____
2. I was a priest and the husband of Elizabeth _____
3. An angel told my father to give me this name _____
4. I was the angel who spoke to Mary _____
5. God found favor with me _____
6. I am the son of God _____



Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question:

If Jesus had just been born in your hometown, what gift would you bring to him, and why?

Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade — to *Catholic Courier*, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is Dec. 21, 2000. The winner will be notified by phone and receive the savings bond by mail. In addition, the winner's essay will be published in an upcoming issue of *Kids' Chronicle*.

Last month's winner was Amanda Widzinski, a fifth-grader at Walt Disney School in Gates. In answer to Why do you think Jesus used parables, or stories, when he was teaching? she wrote, I think Jesus used parables, or stories, when he was teaching for the people to have a better understanding of what Jesus meant by his words. For example, when your teacher at school teaches you a new thing, the teacher has to give examples for the students to truly understand what the teacher means. This applies the same way with Jesus.

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