

Mary, the Mother of our Lord

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." 34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" 35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible." 38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. **Luke 1:26-38**

Mary has been given a place of great honor in the Catholic churches

1. Mary represents the life giving, life nurturing love of God.
 - It was common to call her *Theotokos*, Greek for *God bearer*
 - This was a term coined by an early church father named Origen of Alexandria in 230 AD.
 - This name in English became translated "**mother** of God."
2. "God bearer" is an appropriate moniker for Mary:
 - Jesus is God's Word of forgiveness who was carried and raised by Mary.
 - What task could possibly be more important than being the mother of God?

We should celebrate and honor Mary

1. We celebrate the **loving** and **nurturing** nature of God as seen through God's choice of Mary
 - a. The New Testament records several incidents from the life of the Mary:
 - her **betrothal** to Joseph
 - the **Annunciation** by the angel Gabriel that she was to bear the Messiah
 - her **Visitation** to Elizabeth the mother of John the Baptist
 - the **Nativity** of our Lord
 - the visits of the shepherds and the magi
 - the **Presentation** of the infant Jesus in the Temple at the age of forty days
 - the flight into Egypt
 - the **Passover** visit to the Temple when Jesus was twelve
 - the **wedding** at Cana in Galilee and the performance of her Son's first miracle at her intercession
 - the occasions when observers said, "*How can this man be special? We know his family.*"
 - an occasion when she came with others to see him while he was preaching
 - her presence at the foot of the Cross, where Jesus commends her to the care of the Beloved Disciple
 - her presence with the apostles in the upper room after the **Ascension**, waiting for the promised Spirit
 - b. Mary is thus seen to be present at most of the chief events of her Son's life.

2. Mary in our doctrine

a. Beside Jesus, Mary is one of only two people mentioned in the Apostles Creed: the other is **Pilate**

b. The virgin birth:

- The word we translate as “virgin” would be more accurately translated as “**young woman**.” However, in Jewish culture, this word referred to young women who were not yet married, but have just come of age, usually around 14 years. This is why we translate the word as virgin, in order to convey something significant that is implied by the word but would not be communicated in a literal translation.
- The Spirit blows its wind and gives us life.
- The first time the Spirit breathed life was into the man of dust, **Adam**.
- This is an indication that God is doing something **new**.
- In the virgin birth, the Spirit is again present, with spectacular and unexpected results

3. What do we learn from Mary?

a. She always points to Jesus

- *"Listen to Him. Listen to my Son. Do what He tells you."*
- Our regard for Mary should turn our attention from her to the One whom she carried
- A right regard for Mary will always direct us to **Him** Who found in her His first earthly dwelling-place.

b. God saw something in her that made her a worthy candidate to be mother of Jesus.

- She had a spirit of *"Yes, Lord, do to your servant as you will."*
- We often find **excuses** to following Jesus.
- Mary is always the woman of *"Yes, Lord"*