

Sunday School 22 November 2020: An exciting and scary plan (Luke 1:26-46)

Mary was probably about 16 when she had the most exciting day of her life. Perhaps she was busy with some household task, but I wouldn't be surprised if she was thinking about what it would be like when she was Joseph's wife and doing all these jobs in her own house.

Then she became aware that someone was there with her. She soon realised that he was an angel. Gabriel (that was the angel's name) told her that she was specially beautiful in God's sight and that God was with her. This made her very nervous but Gabriel immediately reassured her, telling her that God had a surprise for her and that she needn't be afraid. He told her that she would become pregnant with a baby boy. Her son was to be called Jesus and he would be king like his grandfather, King David. But unlike David he would rule over his people for ever.

I suspect that Mary didn't take all this information in at that moment. She just focused on the news that she was going to fall pregnant. How on earth could she be pregnant? She had never even had sex with anyone. But God was going to perform a miracle in her body.

How would you react? Ask more questions? Ask why? Panic because you didn't feel ready to have a baby. All of these would be natural reactions. But, although Mary must have wondered about things, she seems to have put all that aside and to have responded in a very mature way for she simply replied that she was God's servant and if this was what God wanted, she was content.

We wonder what happened next! What did she do first - tell her parents or Joseph or rush off to her relative, Elizabeth, to give herself time to think? The angel had told Mary that Elizabeth too was miraculously pregnant. So perhaps Mary wanted to hear her story and compare notes.

When Mary got there, Elizabeth burst out in praise to God for Mary and for the child that she was carrying. Although Elizabeth lived a long way away and probably hadn't even heard about Mary's pregnancy, she knew that someone special had come into her house when Mary and her unborn baby arrived! All at once Mary was able to celebrate her baby!

Accepting God's will wasn't always going to be easy and exciting. Her whole life was being turned upside down. But she accepted this because she was true to God. There were immediate problems to be faced: Joseph wanted to break off their engagement, she had to tell her parents. And for the rest of her life she would be remembered as one who fell pregnant before she was married.

But when Elizabeth sang out in praise, she realised this wasn't just a dutiful thing she was doing for God. She realised that she was part of God's amazing plan; part of the promise he had made to Abraham all those years ago. Imagine how she felt! Maybe after all that was the most exciting day of her life!

Readings:

Monday: Luke 1:26-29

Tuesday: Luke 1: 30-38

Wednesday: Luke 1:39-45

Thursday: Luke 1:46-56

Friday: Psalm 139:1, 11-15