

Prayer Corner 11

Mary's Story

A Contemplative Prayer

by Angie Rebert



Virgin and Child with Four Angels – Gerard David

As I pondered on a prayer post for December, I kept thinking of what it must have been like for Mary to learn she was to give birth to a baby who would be known as the son of God. I would like to share with you my contemplative monologue about Mary's response after hearing such an awesome proclamation. This excerpt is adapted from a Contemplative Nativity Drama I wrote several years ago and was used as our evening worship service at Montgomery Ministries. I invite you to come with me as I imagine Mary's thoughts after the angel's visit.

Read Luke 1: 26-37

I imagine Mary sitting on her favorite little knoll just beyond her home. She is far enough away from the evening noises of the village life, that she feels completely alone. She is imagining what it will be like to be married to Joseph. She has known Joseph all her life as they grew up in the village together, though he was older than she.

She had always liked Joseph but wished she knew him better. He seemed very serious and he was always kind and respectful even to the village children. She wondered what it would be like to be married to Joseph.

She sighed and gazed off at the fast-approaching night sky, as the stars began to twinkle and the moist night air dampened her cheeks. Suddenly the space in front of her started to glow. An angel appeared and delivered such an awesome message that Mary was overwhelmed.

Read again: Luke 1:26-37

After the angel left her, Mary continued to sit and ponder the words she had heard. She repeated out loud the words she had replied to the angel.

“I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me as you have said.”

Mary did not want to return to her family. She wanted to be alone with her thoughts, though she often spoke her thoughts out loud.

“It seemed so real when the angel was here. But now it seems so unbelievable. How could I be carrying the son of God, and my baby will become a King? And I am not yet married?”

*How can this be? I am only a village girl from Nazareth.
I don’t know how to be a good mother.
I don’t even know how to be a good wife.*

*Why? Why did God pick me? (Pause) I don’t feel worthy.
I am not ready for this. (Pause)
But I couldn’t refuse God! I couldn’t say no to God!
Oh God, help me!’*

She wondered, *what do I do now? (Long Pause)*

"I know. I'll go visit my cousin Elizabeth."

Mary's thoughts were racing and her heart pounded in her chest.

*If I am truly with child, dear, sweet, wise Elizabeth,
Elizabeth... praying for a child all these years.
Elizabeth... BARREN all these years.*

*If Elizabeth is indeed with child,
Then what the angel said is true.
And if the angel's words are true for Elizabeth,
Then they are true for me, and I am already with child.*

Mary spoke loudly. ***"Oh, Dear Lord God, HELP ME!"***,

She continued to speak softly to herself.

***"How am I going to tell Joseph?
How am I going to tell my parents?
Oh, Dear God, HELP ME!"***

Then she was quiet as her thoughts raced on

*I must go talk to Joseph first
Ah, there he is over there by the olive tree
He always looks so serious
How shall I tell him?*

"Oh God, help me!" Mary spoke again loudly.
"Please put words into my mouth!"

Contemplative prayer can bring a deep sense of experiencing the scriptures. Maybe that is what is meant by the **Living Word**.

I hope some of you will try this form of contemplative prayer. After immersing yourself into the scripture story, it is important to look for a simple but profound message.

I received this message from Mary's response:

"I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."

What an awesome response for an unwed teen! As I ponder the Birth of Christ Story, I note many signs, followed by faithful committed obedience:

- the prophecy to Zachariah and Elizabeth
- the angel visits to Mary, and to Joseph,
- the heavenly chorus announcement to the shepherds,

- the brilliant star to guide the Wise Men of the East
- and the dream that warned Joseph to flee to Egypt

My prayer as I relive this experience with Mary and envision all the signs God provided to so many is:

**"Oh Lord, May I hear you, and
May I do as You, My Lord desires."**

Click to listen to the song: [Mary did you Know](#).

Sources

Virgin and Child with Four Angels, Gerard David – Public Domain

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Mary Did You Know - YouTube