

July 4

*Mary, mother of our Lord*

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Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel... I went to the prophetess, and she conceived, and bore a son — Isaiah 7:14, 8:1

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[Luke 1:26-38, Nazareth] Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. Having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, you highly favored one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women!"

But when she saw him, she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered what kind of salutation this might be. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and will call his name 'Jesus.' He will be great, and will be called the Son of the

Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. There will be no end to his Kingdom."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, seeing I am a virgin?"

The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the holy one who is born from you will be called the Son of God. Behold, Elizabeth, your relative, also has conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For everything spoken by God is possible."

Mary said, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord. Be it to me according to your word."

The angel departed from her.

1. How is Gabriel's news different this time? How does Mary respond? To what outcome?
2. How do you respond when you find out your plans are disrupted? Why?
3. Lord, Isaiah's wife and Mary conceived, despite Ahaz's refusal and Mary's virginity...