

JESUS AT THE CENTER OF CHRISTMAS

PROTECTED BY PARENTS

December 10, 2023

DIGGING DEEPER

Use this guide by yourself or with friends to pursue a deeper relationship with God.

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Just a young girl, engaged to be married. That is who Mary was when the angel Gabriel came to visit her and share the amazing news of what was to come. She would become pregnant through the Holy Spirit and her son would be the Son of God. Her fiancé Joseph planned to quietly end the engagement, but followed the instructions of an angel to marry her. Mary and Joseph listened to God and raised the baby Jesus. They obeyed when God told them to leave the country when Herod wanted to kill Jesus, and then returned when instructed. Jesus was protected by His earthly parents and by God His Father. This demonstrated great trust on the part of Mary and Joseph. They worked to ensure that His faith was strong. Mary and Joseph visited the temple every year and offered the appropriate sacrifices on behalf of Jesus. What a wonderful example for us!

(Based on Matthew 1:18-25, 2:13-23; Luke 1:26-38, 2:21-24, 33-35, 39-41)

Questions for reflection or discussion:

1. What is your favorite family Christmas memory?
2. In Luke 1:30, Gabriel says to Mary, *Don't be afraid*, a phrase used many times in the Bible. How does it make you feel to know that God has the same message for you?
3. Mary and Joseph showed their trust in God by following the instructions given by the angels. What is an example of how you have expressed your trust in God?
4. What spiritual practices play a role in your life and/or the life of your family? What new practices can you start to help deepen your faith?

