

ELIZABETH AND MARY

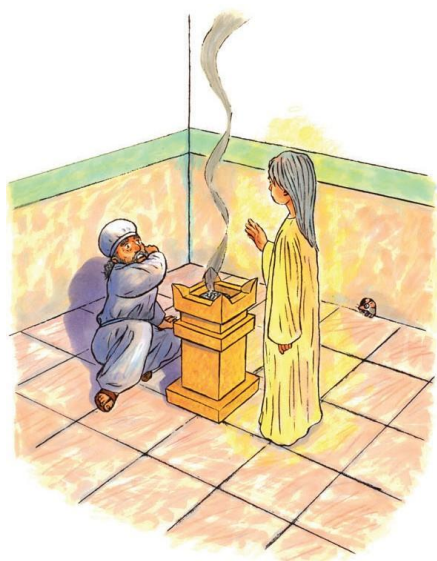
Luke 1:5-16; 18-45, 57-64



Contents

Message	God prepares the way for His Son.
Learning Objectives	The children will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ How Elizabeth and Mary were informed about the birth of John and Jesus.■ How Mary praised God with her song (Magnificat).■ We should believe the messages God gives us.
Bible Text	Luke 1:5–16; 18–45, 57–64

Elizabeth and Mary



Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth, did not have children and were now too old.

One day Zacharias went into God's temple to burn incense, one of his responsibilities as a priest. There an angel appeared to him. Zacharias was startled and overcome by fear.

Gabriel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias. God has heard your prayer. You and your wife, Elizabeth, will have a son. You shall call him John. Even in his mother's womb, he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to God."

Zacharias asked the angel, "How can that be? My wife and I, we are too old. How can we have a baby?" The angel told him, "Because you do not believe me, you will not be able to talk until John is born."

Zacharias, making signs to them, sent them away and then returned home. Soon after this, Elizabeth found out she was going to have a baby. She was very happy and thanked God.

Six months later, the angel Gabriel also appeared to Mary. She was a cousin of Elizabeth. Mary was shocked. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. You have found favour with God and you will have a Son. You shall call Him Jesus. He will be a King and His kingdom will have no end."

Mary asked the angel, "How can I have a son? I am not with a man." The angel replied,

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you and God's power will overshadow you. Therefore, your child will be called the Son of God." The angel added, "Think of Elizabeth, your relative. She is going to have a baby even though she is so old. Everyone thought that she could not have a child. With God nothing is impossible."

Mary said, "Let everything happen as you have said." Then the angel left. Mary rushed over to see Elizabeth.

As she greeted her cousin, the child inside of Elizabeth moved. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women and blessed too is your child! It is a great honour that the mother of my Lord has come to me! As you greeted me the baby leapt for joy inside of me. You are blessed because you believed in God's word. Everything will happen as God has said."

Mary then said, "My soul praises the Lord and my spirit celebrates God my Saviour. For He chose me, even though I am not important, and He has done a great thing to me. He has shown mercy to those who fear Him whether they are young or old. He has scattered those who are proud and defeated kings.

He rose up people who were not important. He has filled people who are hungry with good things, and He has sent away the rich empty. He has helped the people of Israel who had served Him. He has done everything exactly as He promised to our people long ago."

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months then returned home. Elizabeth gave birth to a son. The neighbours and relatives were delighted for her.

The neighbours wanted to call the boy Zacharias, after his father.

But Elizabeth said, "No. He is to be called John." Surprised, her neighbours said, "But none of your relatives are called that." They asked Zacharias what the child was to be called. He wrote on a tablet, His name is John. Everyone was amazed. At that moment, Zacharias was able to speak again and he began to praise God.

Suggestions for the Teacher

Lead-In

Show the picture to the children. Discuss with them what they see. Ask what she/he may feel. Let some of the children play the story in a role-play. Instruct them before. Provide disguise / fancy dress, headscarf, white garment for an angel...

Lesson Instructions

Begin telling the story...

Discuss with the children

- Which messages does the angel give to Mary?
(...that she would bear a son; that her older cousin, Elizabeth, would also give birth to a son.)
- Which messages does the angel give to Zacharias?
(...that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son whose name should be John.)
- Which messages does the angel give to Joseph?
(...that he should not leave Mary and take her as his wife.)

Have the children repeat...

- Elizabeth and Mary were informed about the birth of John and Jesus.
- Mary praised God with her song (Magnificat).
- We should believe the messages God gives us.

Real-Life Application (explain the following)

- Mary could not understand the angel's message to bear a son since she did not know a man, but she believed the angel.
- We do not always understand everything in the divine services, but we believe nevertheless.
- There are different ways we praise and worship God today. (by coming into His house, in our singing, in our prayers, by telling our friends about the great things He has done for us)

<p style="text-align: center;">Repeat the Message God prepares the way for His Son.</p>
