

The Woman The Woman The Woman

full of Grace



The 1st-century BC Galilean Jewish woman named Mary was a virgin who was betrothed to Joseph (Luke 1:26-27). Now we know very well how the story went after Jesus was born, but what about before? Nazareth was a small town that was held in rather low esteem when it comes to its candidacy as the Messiah's hometown. It was far from the social-religious center of the Jerusalem temple, only had a few hundred people and was not close to any major trade route. The verse "Can anything good come out of Nazareth" from John 1:46 described how lowly this city was held at that time. However, God chose a woman from Nazareth to become the mother of the Messiah. As John Paul II puts it: "In the Virgin's case, God's action certainly seems surprising. Mary has no human claim to receiving the announcement of the Messiah's coming. She is not the high priest, an official representative of the Hebrew religion, nor even a man, but a young woman without any influence in the society of her time. In addition, she is a native of Nazareth, a village which is never mentioned in the Old Testament." Not much information is given in the Bible on how Mary's character was before Jesus' time, but it is very obvious that she was pleasing to God or else she would not have been chosen to bear Christ.

During the annunciation the angel came to her and said, "Rejoice full of grace, the Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28). There were not many characters in the bible that were called 'full of grace' by an angel, in fact Mary was the only one. The scripture paints a picture of this young girl who was pious, mature beyond her years, humble and wise. She had the ability to retain and meditate on the deep and surprising issues presented to her mind. For instance, her character shines the brightest in these two points in her life: during the annunciation and Jesus' passion. Let us focus more on the annunciation part. As a human of course she was afraid of the human consequences of being pregnant outside marriage, but she was fully accepting of the news from Gabriel concerning her mysterious impregnation and the upcoming birth of Jesus. Her acceptance was no longer than a single conversation with the angel Gabriel. Imagine yourself in her position, would you not have felt you needed more time to process the life-changing news before saying yes? Her wisdom for her age was shown through her all-time praise-worthy statement: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to Your will" (Luke 1:38).

Your faith is shown through your words and actions... especially during the quiet times when no one is watching. The annunciation did not take place in a public setting, it must have occurred privately since there was no one else mentioned and the angel would have revealed himself privately. Mary's faith and love for God was really shown during the receiving of the Good News, which was most probably one of the most stressful moments in life, but she had such intimacy with God that she trusted Him with everything. Eventually, she earned the name and title of "Full of grace". If you think the annunciation passage immediately jumped to her visitation to Elizabeth's home, you must be mistaken. Mary had to face more challenges before going to Elizabeth's house joyfully. She had to deliver the news to Joseph, who got really shocked until he considered leaving her, and she would have shared the news with her family too. Have you ever thought of how many people who heard Mary's news would think that she was just being crazy? How many people would have tried to convince her to do otherwise? Even until today the thought of giving birth to God sounds heavily intimidating. Nevertheless, Mary's faith dared herself to take those steps and she had her inner circle (e.g. Joseph and Elizabeth) who encouraged and helped her. Finally, she gave birth to our Christ in a manger in Bethlehem.

The story of this small town girl who led her life in the fullest of God's love and was chosen to be His mother is often missed or misunderstood. Her sacrificial love did not only save her family and friends but the whole of humanity from the past, present and future. This is how great Mary is and how her step of courage that she took to push herself and fight against the world really changed everything. Hence, she is indeed more deserving to be known as "God's person, woman, mother and disciple who is full of grace".

Cynthia Wijaya

Get Involved !

CFJ Bible Fellowship

Wednesday, 7 PM

Venue : Will be broadcasted weekly

Contact Person :

Kelvin Sutandar (+62 812-8183-4550)

CFJ Choir Practice

Tuesday, 7 PM

Venue : Ambiente Jln. Senopati no. 70

Contact Person :

Fransiska Darmawan

(+62 812-8183-4550)

CFJ Kids

Weekly Sunday School, 11 AM

Venue : Gereja Katolik St.Perawan

Maria Ratu (Blok Q Church)

Contact Person :

Krista Oen (+61 813-8108-9798)

Friska Ruslim (+62 812-6743-218)

CFJ Mass Servers

Lectors & Altar servers

Contact Person :

Felicia Husada (+61 821-6101-9933)

CFJ Newsletter Team

Contact Person :

Anastasia Liando (+61 821-8800-0821)

CFJ Teens

Contact Person :

Katya Kamdani (+61 815-8348-233)

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Her Her

Story



Leading a life closer to Him as shown by the Bible's different leading ladies.

From Abigail, the wife of Nabal, to Zipporah, Moses' wife, the Bible is full of women coming from all sorts of background, and with a colourful range of personalities and attitudes, that contribute to how their stories played out in His grand plan. Drawing from those Biblical ladies who had their "success stories" etched in history, and those who had their downfall and evil deeds remembered for eternity, one of many lessons to be learned is how the sinning humans could connect to the perfect God, and to even transcend that very nature, to become part of God's greater good for all.

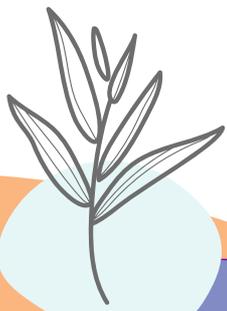
Humility as a servant is one important red thread that all these ladies have, of which Jesus had shown us the best example by coming down to earth to save us. In Matthew 20:26 , 28, he had stated that "instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." James further stressed this point and penned it plainly in his letter: "But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:6 - 7)

Obedying God's words is often hard as it is in today's world, and even more so to take on a whole act of servitude to God. Mother Mary put it in such a beautiful way as she praised Him for the plan in place for her, despite all kinds of sufferings she'd endure from it during her time on earth. "And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.'" (Luke 1: 46 - 50)

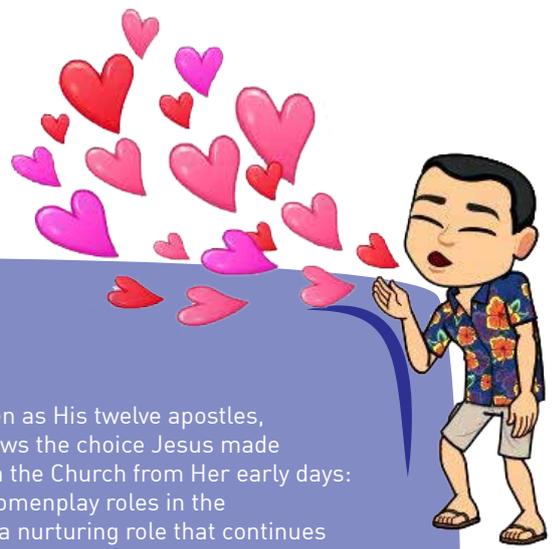
Fearing the Lord here shouldn't be plainly seen as how slaves tremble at their master's punishments, but how children respect their parents out of love and trust. Paul wrote in Galatians 4:7, "So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir." As His children, He has sent us the Holy Spirit to help us learn and understand all the different aspects of loving Him, and living with Him, as King Solomon wrote many times in his exhortations, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10)

Recalling back on how Ruth bravely moved out of her comfort zone to faithfully follow His plan, or how a mother would beg to Jesus for the healing of her sick child despite her outcast status, the Bible tells stories of different types of women from all walks of life. Their life's journeys are all testament of the One God, and examples for us to know Him better and to lead a good life closer to Him, as we humbly obey His guidance.

Edith Esmeralda



Dear Daddy D, Why can't women be priests?



Dear Anon,

Part of the reason women cannot be priest, is tradition. Jesus chose men as His twelve apostles, who in turn did the same for their successors, and thus the Church follows the choice Jesus made (CCC 1577). Despite that, women have always played an important role in the Church from Her early days: on the cross Jesus entrusted His disciples to Mother Mary, and many women play roles in the development of the First Church as can be seen in the Acts of Apostles, a nurturing role that continues until today in the form of many orders of religious sisters and nuns running schools and social charities, as well as in the many daily roles found in our communities: as lectors, EMs, community leaders, and lay preachers.

**An apocryphal assertion on why women can't be priests: in the Eucharists, priests represent Jesus as the groom with the Church as His bride (thus they have to be male).*



Got any questions ? Email Daddy at info@cfjakarta.com

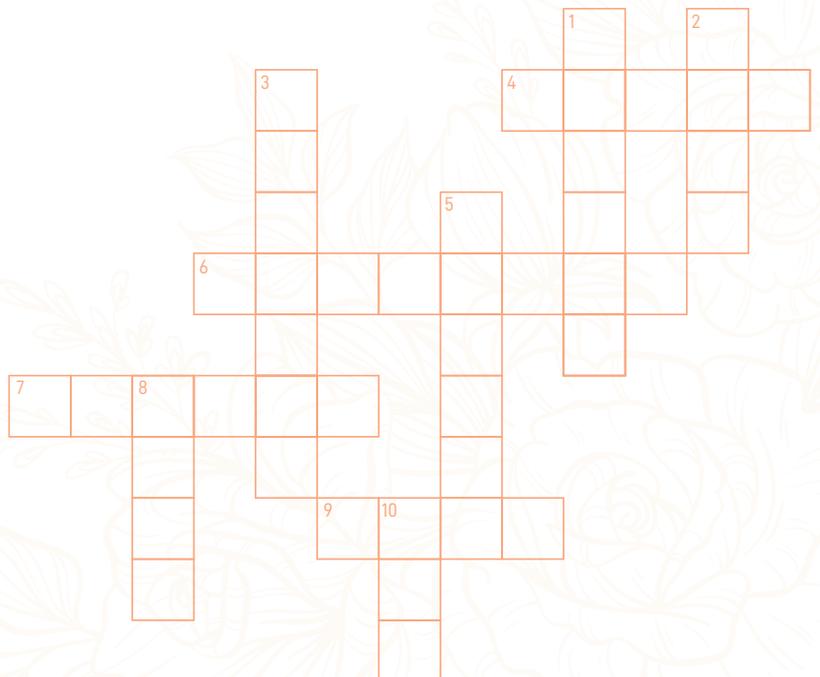
CROSSWORD puzzle

Across

- 4. Abraham's wife - the ONLY women in scripture where her age death is recorded (127 y.o)
- 6. She is the mother of Moses
- 7. Peter raised this woman from the dead
- 9. She was Jacob's first wife

Down

- 1. She is the Wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph
- 2. She is the mother Jesus
- 3. She is the only female judge mentioned in the bible
- 5. She's a nun and a missionary - best known for her devotion to caring for the sick and poor
- 8. She said in Genesis 3:13 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate'
- 10. Her name is connected etymologically with the verb meaning 'to live'



1, Sarah; 2, Eve; 3, Mary; 4, Deborah; 5, Teresa; 6, Ruth; 7, Rachel; 8, Jochebed; 9, Dorcas; 10, Leah



Woman's Role *in the Hands of God*



Imelda Joseph
Senior Catechist & Advisor of CFJ CCD

From the beginning, God created man and woman to complete each other (Genesis 1:27b ; Genesis 2:18). There are some things that men cannot do but women can, and vice versa. When both work together that is when they are able to achieve something closer to perfection. This difference or diversity should not be seen as an issue within ministry in churches, but rather as a blessing for us all. The church invites us, as baptized children of God, to follow in Christ's footsteps. Therefore, men nor women are all called to be Jesus' disciples and to partake in the building of the body of Christ.

It is inevitable that women have played an important role in growing the church. In fact, this has been the case since the time of the Old Testament. There are several women figures in the Bible who were used by God to fulfill His mission of salvation. For example, there are Mother Mary and Queen Ester. In the book of Ester 1-10, it was told that Ester was an orphan in a foreign land who displayed great courage in the midst of a crisis. Prior to risking her life for her people, she humbled herself by fasting and put her considerable beauty, social grace and wisdom in the service of God's plan.

Mary in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luk 1:26-80 was a virgin from a poor family who lived in an obscure village in Galilee. Her response to Gabriel reveals a young woman of unusual faith and humility. Her unqualified 'yes' to God's plan for her life entailed great personal risk and suffering. She must have endured seasons of confusion, fear and darkness as the event of her life unfolded. She is honored not only as the mother of Jesus, but also as His first disciple.

Those women are examples of living testimonies who surrendered and dedicated their lives to God. Regardless of gender, we can learn so much from them such as their bravery to take risks and the sacrifices they made for God's greater glory.

As God's servant, I feel blessed and fortunate to be a part of Christ's ministry through the Church. Today, the Church is more open to women's involvement in various ministerial positions that were once only reserved for men. Examples of these roles include Eucharist Ministers and Altar servers. With this opportunity given to us by the Church, we should never take it for granted or let it go to waste. Instead, we should maximize our full potential so that we can become positive impacts and God's vessels of love for everyone. Just like what Mother Teresa said, "It's not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts".

Man and woman are both created in God's image. Neither is a lesser form of being and their differences fit them for different roles. God makes woman "from man" and woman was created in order to be a "helper fit for him". I believe that church leadership mimics this creation mandate and the roles of husband and wife in the family. God made it a beautiful harmony of respectful submission of the wife and the loving headship of the husband. "Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church." I fully support male leadership and responsibility in the Church.

The female role model I aspire to be and in carrying out my responsibilities as CFJ's leader is depicted in Proverbs 31: 10-31 on the "Poem on the Woman of Worth". She is wise, industrious, and courageous, clothed with strength and dignity, excelled in taking care over the affairs of her household; a woman who fears and loves the Lord. My role, is to pray and to be God's vessel to uphold His purposes. Pray to wisely discern where God wants CFJ to be and to take initiative to get us there in reliance on God's power and providence. It is God's church and our ministries are His works. We serve with the full confidence that God will finish the good works that He started in us. However, before we continue to expand and evangelize outwards, it is of utmost importance to first grow in our own personal relationship with God, to go back to what truly matters, putting Christ at the center of our ministry. We need to be constantly reminded of who we are in relation to Christ and that Christ is the head of the Church.



Jessica Winarko
CFJ President

