

Our Blessed Mother Was NEVER an Unwed Mother!

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the Virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God..." (The New American Bible, Luke 1:26-36.)



Recently, a religious made the statement at a very public forum that we Christians first met Jesus "**as a stirring embryo in the womb of an unwed mother.**" This is an error flowing from ignorance of the first century Jewish religion and from mistranslations of the terms "betrothed" as "engaged" and "I do not know man" as "I have no husband." This New American Bible translation says, "I have no relations with a man," a better translation that gives implicit Scriptural evidence of Mary's vow of virginity which she intended to keep for life, unless God willed otherwise. **The Angel's remarks indicate God's pleasure in honoring Mary's vow with the miraculous conception of Jesus.**

A first century Jewish marriage at the time of Mary and Joseph had two stages: the **kiddushin, the betrothal**, took place when a contract or covenant was signed according



to the Mosaic law, binding the bride and groom as legally married. The second stage, the **nisuin, the full-fledged marriage**, occurred later when the groom took his bride into his home. The root word for "kiddushin" means "sanctified", something set aside for a specific (sacred) purpose; thus, the woman is set aside to be the wife of a particular man and no other in the sacred bond of marriage for their sanctification. Kiddushin is far more binding than an engagement in our culture. **Once kiddushin is complete, the woman is legally the wife of the man and the relationship can only be dissolved by death or divorce;** however, the spouses do not live together at the time of the kiddushin. From the passage for the

Annunciation, it is clear that Mary, addressed as the virgin betrothed to Joseph, had completed this first stage of marriage, the kiddushin, and was truly married to Joseph and was his wife, **not an unwed mother.** The nisuin (from a word meaning "elevation") completes the process of marriage when the husband takes his wife into his home and

they are elevated in this most sacred bond of a covenant relationship of marriage before God. Reference: [Mary J. Giovanoni https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7535](https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7535)

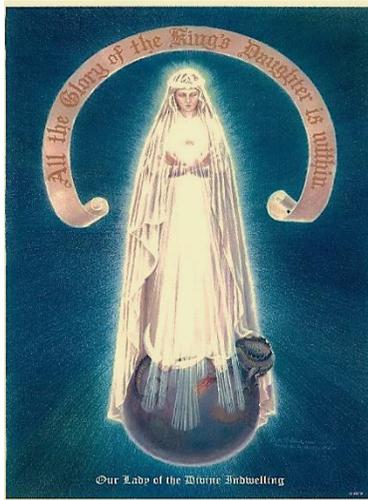
Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ... When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. (The New American Bible, Matthew 1:18-25.)



Again, the angel acknowledges Mary as betrothed to Joseph, her husband, and bids Joseph complete the second stage of marriage by taking her into his home. There are various views on what Joseph's struggle with Mary's pregnancy actually meant. Tradition and Church teaching tell us Mary and Joseph both made vows of virginity before marriage and each accepted the other's vow. We also know God Himself had planned this marriage in Heaven for His own purpose, our salvation, and spared no favor in adorning Mary as the most pure and fitting vessel in which to bear His Son into our world in her flesh so He might dwell among us. Joseph, too, had been chosen by God and was given a fullness of grace befitting his singular and profound mission in God's plan of salvation, standing in the place of God the Father over His Son. Dare we think God, having granted Mary the singular privilege of her Immaculate Conception, freedom from the slightest stain of sin of any kind, in preparation for her Divine Motherhood, would ever allow even the slightest hint of sin, as implied in being an unwed mother, to touch her? And Joseph, blessed with his own fullness of grace and his knowledge of the Scriptures regarding the Promised Messiah, surely recognized a mysterious work of God taking place in Mary that he could not explain, and of which he felt unworthy to partake. Would it not be better for him to divorce her, to quietly disappear, so no question of infidelity could ever be cast upon Mary? Neither Mary nor Joseph could explain what wondrous deed God was working in her, but Joseph's fears were allayed when the angel announced that he was to be Virgin-Father to the Son of God, the Messiah, and must take Mary and her child into his home and be guardian over God's two most precious treasures. This trinity of virgins constitute the Hypostatic Order of Grace in which the Son of God assumes a human nature with His Divine nature in His one Divine Person! The Hypostatic Union!

The Catholic Church has defined four dogmas about Mary we must believe. The first, on which all others depend, is her Divine Motherhood of the Word Incarnate Who is God; as mother of the person, she is Mother of God. The second, her Immaculate Conception preserved her from every stain of sin, original and personal, so she might be the purest of flesh to give a human body to the living God. So great was this mission that she was consecrated completely to God, a virgin, before, during and after the birth of Jesus; hers was a perpetual virginity, the third dogma. The fourth is her Assumption. Because of

these unique privileges and Mary's esteemed place in the work of redemption, Jesus saw fit to protect her body from the decay of the flesh that is punishment for sin.



In the message of Our Lady of America, Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil records an apparition of a new image of Our Lady as Our Lady of the Divine Indwelling. She states: **This vision of herself is very important, as it reveals Our Lady as she really and truly was, the Immaculate Tabernacle of the Indwelling God.** (Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA, Pg. 22.)

Every September we celebrate Mary's birth, her holy name and her sorrows. Mary is the solitary boast of our nature, the most beloved daughter of the Father, the Immaculate Mother of the Son, and the most holy Spouse of the Holy Spirit, the most blessed of all women. No one can honor Mary more that God Himself has, and any dishonor to her will not go unpunished. **We must make reparation for such errors in teaching and the insults and sacrilege committed against her holy name and her sacred images.** May God have mercy on those who chop off the head of Our Lady's statues. Let the following words of Venerable Fulton J. Sheen impress on us the care with which God prepared Mary to be His Mother, and ours. May we magnify the awe and love with which God first loved her!

When God willed to become Man, He had to decide on the time of His coming, the country in which he would be born, the city in which He would be raised, the people, the race, the political and economic systems that would surround Him, the language He would speak, and the psychological attitudes with which He would come in contact as the Lord of History and the Savior of the World. All these details would depend entirely on one factor: the woman who would be His Mother. To choose a mother is to choose a social position, a language, a city, an environment, a crisis, and a destiny.



His Mother was not like ours, whom we accepted as something historically fixed which we could not change; He was born of a Mother whom He chose before He was born. It is the only instance in history where both the Son willed the Mother and the Mother willed the Son. And this is what the Creed means when it says "born of the Virgin Mary". She was called by God as Aaron was, and Our Lord was born not just of her flesh but also by her consent. ...

We should not be surprised that she is spoken of as a thought by God before the world was made. When Whistler painted the picture of his mother, did he not have the image of her in his mind before he ever gathered his colors on his palette? If you could have preexisted your mother (not artistically, but really), would you not have made her the most perfect woman that ever lived—one so beautiful she would have been the sweet envy of all women, and one so gentle and so merciful that all other mothers would have sought to imitate her virtues? Why, then, should we think that God would do otherwise? (Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, THE WORLD'S FIRST LOVE, Mary, Mother of God, Ignatius Press, Pgs. 14-15.)

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feast of the Nativity of Mary.
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