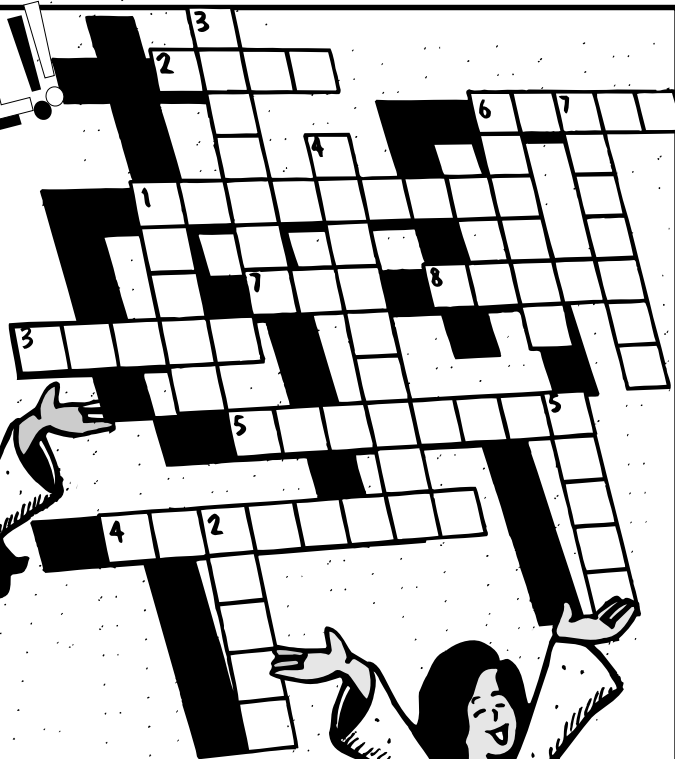


HAIL!

○ favored one, the Lord is with you!



Study the inside to get the answers.

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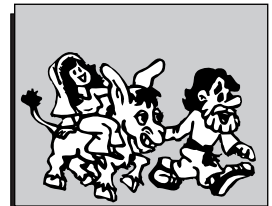
- Joseph worked as one.
- John called Jesus the _____ of God.
- A great big, wonderful meal. A celebration.
- Lambs were killed and eaten on this day.
- Mary and Joseph's home town.
- Mary's son.
- Mary saw her son _____.
- Jesus worked at his father's _____.

**D
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- Jesus died on one.
- It pierced Mary's heart.
- The angel called Mary a _____ one.
- At Passover, they _____ freedom.
- Mary and Joseph ran from him into Egypt.
- The river in which John baptized people.
- They celebrate freedom from this.

God's People weekly

Kidsword



The long road to Bethlehem

Mary!

She had a very special baby!

Find 20 nice words about Mary, below!

IS SHE THE GREATEST WOMAN SINCE GOD CREATED EVE?

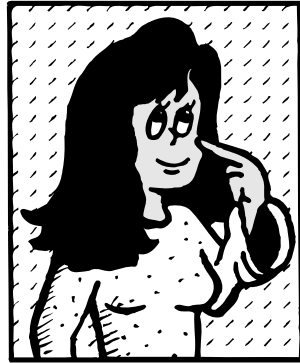
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LOVELYE



ALSO:
Exclusive Drawings
Interview
Life of Mary Crossword

COVER STORY

If an angel from heaven appeared out of nowhere and said to you, "Hail, favored one, the Lord is with you!" what do you suppose you would do? Faint? Run and hide? See a psychiatrist? If (assuming you're a woman) the angel then told you that you were pregnant with the son of God, would you believe it? Would you tell anyone? What if you were engaged to be married? How would you tell your Fiancé?



It would take a very courageous and special young woman to handle such a difficult experience, which must be why God chose Mary. "Naturally, I was frightened and confused," she told this reporter, "and I had to ponder the experience within my heart for a long time. In the end, I knew it had to be God, for everything the angel said came to pass."

Mary's life didn't end in Bethlehem. She and Joseph raised their son back in their home town of Nazareth after fleeing Bethlehem and Herod's murderous wrath for a stay in Egypt. Life in Nazareth was "just ordinary village life," according to Mary. "Joseph worked as a carpenter and he taught Jesus everything he knew." Jesus worked at his father's trade until one very special day. .

Jesus had a cousin named John. Many thought of him as a special messenger from God, others thought he was crazy. John was baptizing, or bathing people in the Jordan river, helping them to turn away from their sins. Jesus also went to the river. "John said he saw the Holy Spirit come down upon my son, and then he kept calling him the Lamb of God," said Mary. "That upset me! Do you know what happens to lambs at Passover?" Mary was referring to the feast at which Hebrew families kill and eat a lamb to celebrate their freedom from slavery in Egypt.



"When Jesus was a baby, we had him dedicated to God at the Temple. An old prophet held Jesus and said some wonderful things about him. But then he looked at me and said, 'And a sword shall pierce your heart.' I know now that he meant a sword of sorrow, for I felt the tip of that sword when John called Jesus the Lamb of God. And just a few years later, by the cross, I felt its length go through me as I saw my son die. "

OUR GP INTERVIEW

Match the questions with the answers.



Mary and her late husband, Joseph.

GP: Bethlehem. What words come to mind about it?

GP: Jesus as a boy. What was he like?

GP: How do you spend your time now?

GP: You must think you're pretty special, being chosen God and all that.

GP: Tell us about Joseph.

GP: Any regrets?

GP: Do you have a favorite apostle?

GP: We've always wanted to know this, and we thought you might have some insight. How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

Mary: *Given my life and the choices I've had to make, I'd have to say no. None.*

Mary: *Not at all. God sometimes does things for reasons we aren't able to understand. The angel said I had found favor with God. How? Is it because I'm so great, or because God is? I hope you know the answer!*

Mary: *I have no idea. Is that a trick question of some kind?*

Mary: *They all have their good points, and a few rough edges, too. That new one, Paul, smart, and very interesting; and I've always loved Peter dearly! How could I choose just one?*

Mary: *I'll never forget the time his little cousin came running up to me and said angrily, "That Jesus! He thinks he's God's gift to the world!" What could I say? He is God's gift to the world! And as a son, he was always a gift to me.*

Mary: *Serving. All I have ever wanted to be is a vessel from which the life of God is poured.*

Mary: *Crowded, uncomfortable, smelly, glorious, shepherds, angels, the happiest and one of the hardest days of my life.*

Mary: *He was the most decent man I've ever known. You know, he was much older than I was, but he always treated me with respect and kindness. Perhaps God chose me partly so Joe could be there to raise Jesus, too.*