

## **“Big Reveal”: A Royal Son**

**Intro.** We have many customs to announce the pending birth of a child. At first there may be an attempt to keep the news a surprise for a while, but there is always someone who can't keep the secret. It leaks out. Announcements are sent. Multiple baby showers are planned for family and friends to gather with the new parents. Now it's a social media event. There is a new custom: the “Big Reveal.” It is a party to announce whether the baby is a girl or boy. Pink or blue balloon. One, or more than one baby. But not everyone goes big. Some people for many reasons of their own choose smaller and quieter ways to make known the coming birth.

**I.** The story of the birth announcement of the couple told in today's gospel was certainly out of the ordinary. An angel made the first, stunning

announcement to Mary. Luke tells us she was initially confused by the greeting, “...you have found favor with God.” It sounded like a good thing, but what did it mean? It is kind of like when we hear, “You're a winner!” but aren't told what that is. The next part of the announcement amazed her: she would have a son who would be called the “Son of God.” It's good that Mary was a strong woman or she might have fainted. She was also a smart woman and asked for some details. They were vague but when given the sign of her cousin Elizabeth's own pregnancy, it was enough for her to say yes. As we know from the next verse, Mary wasted no time going to see Elizabeth and her miracle. After that joyous meeting, there was a more difficult announcement to be made - to Joseph. Imagine the conversation; the anxiety and pain when Joseph

could not understand. Only when the Lord sent a similar message in a dream to *him*. He and Mary began to reflect on the meaning together. Joseph was also chosen to be part of this plan. The announcement was later shared with their families and friends and the usual preparations were made for the birth. The future must have seemed so uncertain for Joseph and Mary.

**Concl.** As this was not an ordinary announcement, neither was it an ordinary birth. The child was unlike any other ever born in history. That annunciation has echoed across the centuries and across our world. A few thousand years ago it was through angels. (Some say angels are still at work among us.) Today, the announcement of the Lord is made more often, not by angels, but by you and me. God always finds new ways to tell the world of the

coming of the Son. Despite some of its craziness, social media has great potential for making known the Lord. Not the birth of a baby, but the life and grace brought to our world by the Son of God. As we prepare to welcome Him when he comes again, we are made partners with Joseph, Mary and Elizabeth and Zechariah. Do not look for others to make the “big reveal” about the Messiah. We must look at ourselves and our actions every day and respond as Mary and so many have, “I am the servant of the Lord.” What can we do this week to announce the good news of Jesus Christ?

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