

**GOSPEL PEARLS**

## **Obey before understanding**

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*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.*

*And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "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. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1: 26-38)*

When God reveals Himself, He chooses humble people so that they do not add or take away anything from what He has revealed, regardless of their understanding of the words they have received. Thus, in Mary's case, the explanations she seeks from the angel are not asked out of curiosity but to be sure she has heard correctly. The answers deepen the mystery and, in short, require the commitment of faith, that is, the willingness to love God before understanding Him. Mary helps us to submit meekly to the Father's divine plan, even when we do not understand it.