Opinion
Spirituality



by NCR Staff

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December 31, 2021
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In her most recent column, St. Joseph Sr. Christine Schenk asks what could better witness the power of an unpredictable God than to raise up a long-awaited Messiah from the least powerful of humans — a child born of an unwed mother?

Mary as a single mom. Lovely choice by a loving God. Echoes true down the ages. Great article as usual from St. Joseph Sr. Christine Schenk. Whatever was God up to

having Jesus the son of single mom?

But at the end, at the foot of the cross, only his mom Mary can look up at him and whisper to herself, and it be true, "This is my body, this is my blood."

No single moms among the patriarchy.

PETER MANNING

Port Coquitlam, British Columbia



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In response to the article by St. Joseph Sr. Christine Schenk, I noticed that there are some difficulties with historical facts.

The original documents surrounding the birth indicate that Jesus was born to Mary of Nazareth, wife of Joseph. She was not a single mom.

Why would one want to challenge patriarchs when the scriptures meticulously uphold the patriarchy of Jesus in the genealogical accounts of Matthew and Luke?

Jesus did indeed have an unconventional birth (as Amy Jill Levine notes), because he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. This is unconventional, and indicates that with God nothing is impossible.

There is nothing in the texts to remotely suggest that his birth restructures a perception of family. In fact, the holy family actually inspires families: that God is with us all: father, mother and child.

May God bless all families and save us from revisionists.

SONJA MAIERHAUSER

Spring Lake, Michigan

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St. Joseph Sr. Christine Schenk's article contains a commonly believed fundamental error. Mary was legally married to Joseph at the time of the Annunciation. However, they had not yet begun to live together as man and wife (consummation). This is clear even in the quotation in the article from Sulpician Fr Raymond Brown's book, *The Birth of the Messiah*: "In the eyes of men her pregnancy was a scandal since she had not lived with her husband."

There is strong evidence that Mary had previously made a vow of perpetual virginity, hence her puzzlement at the angel Gabriel's announcement as to her future motherhood.

Crucially, though some would wish it otherwise, Jesus was not born to an "unwed mother." God would not and did not, act in contravention to his own laws regarding marriage; copious Biblical scholarship confirms this.

ELIZABETH McDERMOTT

Dublin, Ireland

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St. Joseph Sr. Christine Schenk's article was fantastic. I had never thought about that as many times as I have listened to the "begats."

I often reflect on the fact that Jesus would not have come to us as part of the redemptive plan if it were not for this blessed woman. I guess, if we as women think we got the short end of the stick, we have just to look at our Mother Mary. Like most women, she did her work quietly and without fanfare from the stable to the cross.

JANE FRANCISCO

Charlotte, North Carolina

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Years ago, I wanted to make a nicer Jesse Tree for our family and ordered ornaments from a small business. But, I wanted more women represented on the tree for my sons, but especially to make sure my daughter felt represented. So, I got the owner to develop new ornaments for Rahab, Miriam, Deborah, Ruth and Sarah. The owner still has them on her site.

I never could figure out appropriate ornaments for Tamar or Bathsheba.

My daughter never did think much of the Jesse Tree, which I still use, but I think it was the right thing to do.

JOHN SWANSON

Lakeville, Minnesota

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