



God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary to tell her she will conceive a child of God:

**"The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
the power of the Highest hover over you;
Therefore, the child you bring to birth
will be called Holy, Son of God."**

**Mary said to the angel,
"But how? I've never slept with a man."**

**Instead of answering directly, Gabriel
strengthens her faith: "And did you know
that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son,
old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and
here she is six months pregnant! Nothing,
you see, is impossible with God."**

**And Mary said:
"Yes, I see it all now:
I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve.
Let it be with me
just as you say."**

Luke 1:11-15: 57-59 (NRS)

**And I imagine Gabriel saying to all the people
through Mary and Elizabeth:
"As an angel I could think I know everything.
I spend all my time looking down on the
world. I've found it takes looking up like Mary
to gain perspective. It's a great reminder for
humankind that to trust what they cannot
see is what they receive without knowing."**

— Christine



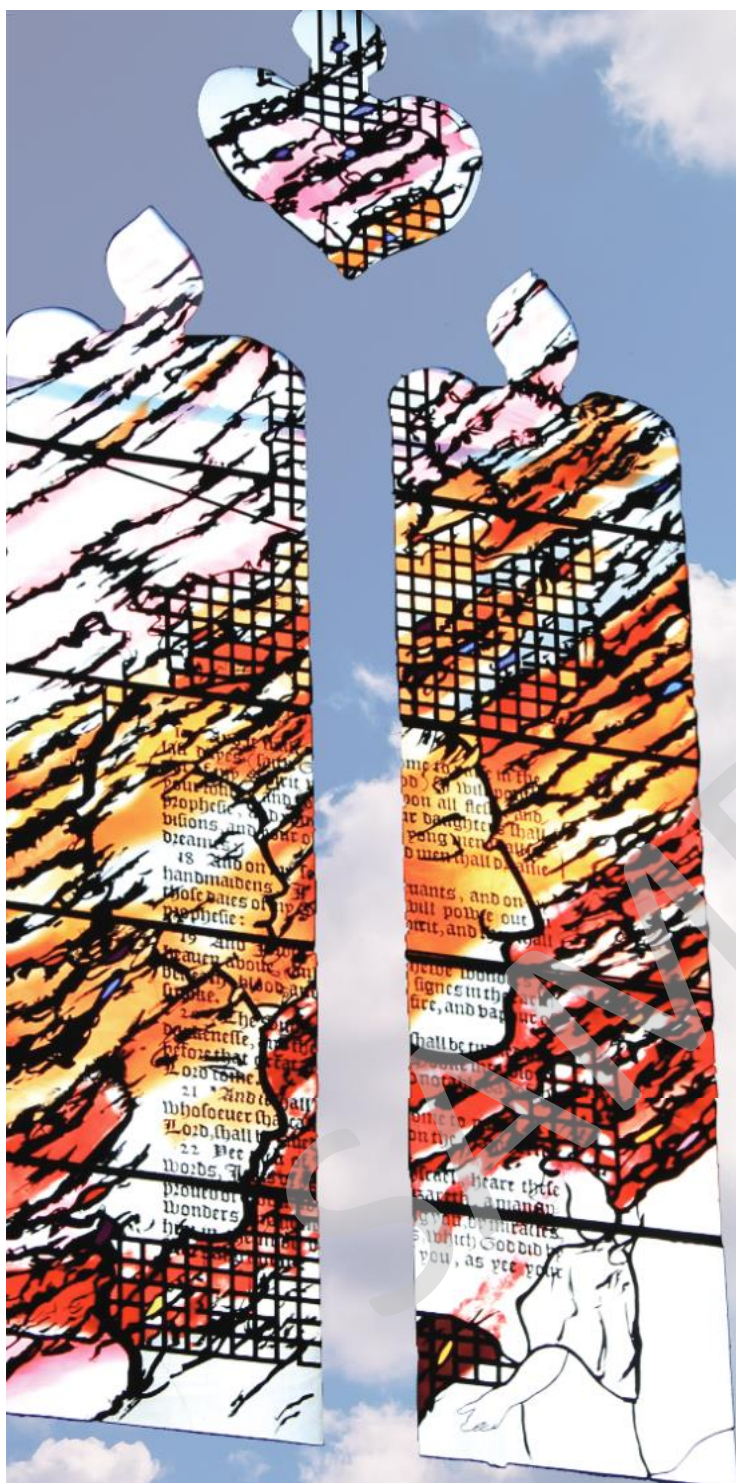
SAMPLE

Listening

Listen to the trees, to the natural waters, to the sand of the desert, to the stones of the mountains: God will show up anywhere you are willing to listen. Why do people believe more in words written on papers by humans when it comes to God? And why do I feel that at times a natural scientist, calling himself an atheist, has more connection to God than a theologian studying the books of religion.

Is it because we forget how to listen while we learn how to read?

— Kristina Tauch



Christ the [adventure(r)]

Act One:

In the dead deep of winter came the birth of a new Light. The unexpected Element of Holy surprise, illuminating the night. Born into the theatre of the oppressed, the colonized Judea, he shared his lunch of fish with his audience and told stories that were befuddling on purpose. He took long lonely walks in the desert. He laughed with children, aggravated his mother, listened to the elderly, cared for the sick, treated women like men and asked fishers to fish while he...walked on water. Why not? He confounded the politically ambitious by riding on stage left for his final scene on the back of an ornery mule. His death was gory and gloriously inglorious. He disappeared. Then He arrived. With an entirely new

Act Two:

We are called into engagement **in-spirit**.

— Lucia Frangione



Poster image in the "Cradle of Humankind" Museum at Marapeng, South Africa, near the site of the discovery of a 2.5 million year old fossil nicknamed "Mrs. Ples."

Love Is My Mother

It is Love that makes people happy.
It is Love that fills happiness with joy.
It is Love that birthed me, not my mother.
A hundred blessings and praises to that Mother!
[Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi: Quatrain 449]

From The Rumi Daybook, selected and translated by Kabir and Camille Helminski, Shambhalla Press, 2012, p. 219, used with permission.

