

Mary's Story
from the James's Gospel

From the apochryphal book, the Infancy Gospel of James, written early in the second century.

Mary's parents: Anne, Joachin (prob. not authentic, taken from the Protoevangelicum [Infancy Gospel of James])

Brothers: James, Joseph, Simon, Judas (Jude) (Matt 13:55)

Sisters: not named but later Christian literature gives names Mary and Salome

Full sibs or not?

Helvidian view: yes, born of Mary after Jesus -- named for a 4th century Roman.

Epiphonian view: no, born to Joseph and previous wife (named after 4th century bishop Epiphanius in Salamis, Cyprus). Supported by Infancy Gospel of James, Infancy Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Peter.

Hieronymian view: first cousins of Jesus (Jerome).

Clopas (Cleopas), brother of Joseph, so Jesus's uncle -- according to Hegesippus, quoted by Eusebius. And in John 19:25, Mary, Clopas's wife, stood at the cross with Mother Mary and Mary Magdalene. And in Luke 24:18, Jesus appeared to Cleopas and another (perhaps his wife Mary) on the road to Emmaus.

Cousin Simon (son of Clopas) succeeded James in leading Jerusalem Church in 62 when James was martyred (stoned), and was in turn martyred (crucified) by Trajan circa 98 (according to Hegesippus).

From the Infancy Gospel of James

Mary's parents were Joachim and Anna, a wealthy and prominent Jewish couple in Jerusalem. When God answered her prayers for a child, she named her Mary and dedicated her to God (James 4:2). For three years she remained at home, then was taken to the Temple in Jerusalem where she lived until she was twelve, being fed "like a dove, receiving her food from the hand of a heavenly messenger" (James 8:2). At age twelve, and about to become a woman, the priests wondered what to do with her (James 8:4-8). An angel instructed them to summon all the widowers of Judea to the Temple. Joseph was chosen as Mary's husband when a dove flew out of his staff and perched on his head. He at first refused to accept her, saying he was too old and already had children. However, he accepted her only as his ward and placed her in a separate house from his own (James 9). Ten chapters in the Infancy Gospel then enumerate Mary's virtuous deeds. When Mary was 16, she went out to fill her water jar and was hailed by a male voice, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women" (James 11:2). She rushed home, resumed her spinning and was then told she would bear God's son (James 11:5-9). She became pregnant, was accused first by Joseph and then by the high priest of having been with another man. She denied it vehemently (James 14:5, 15:13). She and Joseph were given the "drink test" as prescribed in Numbers 5:11-31 and passed it (James 16:7).