**Reading after Luke 1: 26-38**

How can it be, God,

that you chose Mary?

She was just a village girl

in an obscure part of the world

which never quite

made the headlines.

How can it be that you sent

this poor woman an angel

to terrify and confuse her

with news that turned

her world upside down?

How can it be that Gabriel,

beating great wings,

filling the house with light,

could say, ‘Do not be afraid’?

How can it be that

she was no longer afraid

and talked with the angel

as with an equal?

How can it be that

she said ‘Yes’ to God?

I do not understand,

but I am encouraged:

If you send me an angel

may I not be afraid.

May I say ‘Yes’.