

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, May 31st 2013

During the month of May we give thanks to Mary and all of her blessings upon us. On this final day of May we wrap up a month during which we celebrated in thanksgiving for our mothers on Mother's Day, marked new beginnings with graduation ceremonies and welcome the season of summer.

What a gift today to take time to pray with the story from Luke of Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth when they were both expecting their sons, Jesus and John. Usually when I spend time with this reading, I focus on Elizabeth as I always hoped to become a mother and it was not until I was in my late 30's when my daughters were born. Elizabeth's story of faith and solidarity is compelling.

Today I am overwhelmed by Mary's amazing witness to God's love. She tells Elizabeth: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord. My spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant." She goes on to tell Elizabeth: "He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent away empty."

I am struck by the calm confidence Mary has in God's steadfast love. She took enormous risk to accept the invitation of that love, but she trusted. I hear Mary calling me to be open and available to God's love of me. I too am God's lowly servant who is hungry for the goodness of the Lord. Mary wants me to celebrate the gift of God's love with her rather than passively praying about her life. She assures me God loves me as he loves her.

Now I feel inspired by Mary to bear witness to God's love. This inspiration brings more questions than answers: How can I be aware of the signs of God's presence within me? How can I be more present to others modeling the way Mary was so present to her cousin Elizabeth? In the hectic pace of life, how can I slow down so I can make the best choices with the gifts I have been given by God? Where do I need to be brave and be more explicit about my faith? How can I bring that faith to action for the greater glory of God?

During the month of May I reawakened my enjoyment of taking a daily walk. I live near a walking trail in my neighborhood and the Creighton campus is beautiful this time of year. I can now bring these questions with me on my daily walk as I feel Mary's encouraging presence reminding me to be ever open to God's love.

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