

Prayerful preparation for The Assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven

Luke 1:39-56 *The Almighty has done great things for me.*

After the angel had left her, Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

And Mary said:

'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord
and my spirit exults in God my saviour;
because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.

Yes, from this day forward
all generations will call me blessed,
for the Almighty has done great things for me.

Holy is his name,
and his mercy reaches from age to age
for those who fear him.

He has shown the power of his arm,
He has routed the proud of heart.

He has pulled down princes from their thrones
and exalted the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things,
the rich sent empty away.

He has come to the help of Israel his servant,
mindful of his mercy

– according to the promise he made to our ancestors –
of his mercy to Abraham
and to his descendants for ever.’

Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then
went back home.

Reflection

Two mothers meet. John and Jesus meet prenatally. Two encounters take place.

John leaps for joy in his mother's womb as Mary carries the presence of Jesus to him. Both women praise God.

Mary carried and went on to give birth to Jesus' divine presence in our world.

Amazingly this encounter can be the model of our calling, our vocation, and our mission.

All of us are likewise called to give birth to Jesus' presence in our world, to carry Jesus to those we meet.

Do we ever recognise the lowly, the hungry and the poor?

Do they feel energised, hopeful, forgiven after meeting us?

Do we truly bring them good news?

Is it possible we too, at times, are the rejected, the hungry and the poor?

Can we minister, carry Jesus, to each other?

Is this what it means to bring about the Kingdom of God here on earth?

Can you ask yourself what burdens, troubles, and worries are weighing you down?

How can you, like Mary, entrust yourself more to God's loving care?

Do you believe in God's unearned care and love for each and all of us?

Prayer suggestions

Lectio Divina

Using the words of the Magnificat, Read, Meditate, Pray, Contemplate, i.e. rest in an awareness of God's loving presence.

Imaginative

Write your own Magnificat, your own thanks and praise to God for all he has done in your life.

Practical

Plan an act of charity for someone in need, then carry it out either alone or with the help of others.

Thoughtful

Consider the ministry of Mary towards her cousin Elizabeth. Dialogue with God about ministry to the lowly and outcast.

Apply the words What? Why? How? When? Where? With? Who?

And what support is needed for this ministry, your encounter with the poor, your chance to make God known to others?