

Formed in Prayer



*Let us be still
and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us*

Dear Father,
Be with us as we pray.
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.
Send your Holy Spirit to inspire and sustain us in our mission.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Gospel

Luke 1: 39-56

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.

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday's Gospel reading?
What might God be saying to you in and through the Gospel?*



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Reflection

“The Almighty has done great things for me; he has lifted up the lowly.”

Have you ever wondered how you ended up in your vocation or ministry of leadership and service? In short have you ever wondered, ‘Why me Lord? Wasn’t there someone better suited; more experienced or gifted? Someone holier than me?’

If you have ever wrestled with these questions you need to know that share much in common with biblical leaders like Moses, Jeremiah, Gideon, David, and Paul. If you examine biblical accounts of their call, there is an undeniable pattern - God calls the least likely! God called a enslaved people to freedom as His Chosen People, he calls the young to prophesy, he overlooks the eldest in anointing kings, he lifts up and blesses the womb of one unmarried to “fill the hungry with good things.” A Nazarene himself, Jesus calls Galilean fishermen and a despised tax collector as apostles, women as first witnesses to the resurrection. He called the zealous persecutor Paul to convert the Gentiles and, throughout history, sinners to poverty and chastity as saints.

But humility alone is not enough. There must be a child in all of us who leaps whenever the Lord draws near, whenever the Word Incarnate speaks to our hunger, as he did John the Baptist in the womb of Elizabeth. In humility, let’s make our daily prayer, “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my saviour; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid.” Know that God has looked upon us, loves us, calls us and now walks with us to do great things in our families, our school, our parishes and our communities. And know, like Elizabeth, that you are indeed blessed!

(Greg Wilson, CSYMA Manager)

With Elizabeth we pray,

Hail Mary, full of grace.
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen