

Prayer and Dinner – Advent

Sunday December 20 2009

Opening Reflection

As we prepare each year for the feast of Christmas, we have a precious opportunity to reflect upon the marvellous context of the Christian vision. The Incarnation, the birth of Jesus, is the revelation of God. It is the showing of His power, His wisdom, His love in the man Jesus.

The Incarnation is like the pouring out of God on earth and, as the life of Jesus proves, God holds nothing back. The generosity of God is incarnated in the generosity of Jesus. In his life, we see his availability to the crowds, His compassion for the sick, for the mourning. His utter selflessness, we know, comes to a climax in his death on the cross.

Christ was born at Bethlehem, and that is a marvellous fact. But it is a fact that is completed. It is completed in the past so that now, He must be born in our hearts. Our hearts must be made ready for Him. There must be room for Him in the inn of our heart.



Reflection

Third Day
"Merry Christmas"

Reflection

Listen to Mary as she tells you of her visit to Elizabeth in her own words, especially:



1. Her sudden realization that now that she was carrying the 'Son of the Most High', her life was no longer her own. She could no longer remain in solitude with God, in isolation. God was working through her a Plan that would reach farther than Mary could possibly imagine. And so she set out in haste to bring the Word within her, as well as her own loving care, to Elizabeth in her need.

2. Her amazement that her own simple greeting, heralding as it did the presence of the Child she was carrying, could bring such joy to, Elizabeth and the babe in her womb.

3. How during the whole long trip from Nazareth to Elizabeth's home about seventy miles, probably on foot she had wondered why all this was happening, why she had been chosen; and how Elizabeth's words now provided an answer: 'Blest is she who trusted the Word of he Lord'.

Lectio Divina on the Gospel Reading

Gospel Lk 1:39-45



Mary set out
and travelled to the hill country in haste
to a town of Judah,
where she entered the house of
Zechariah

and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the infant leaped in her womb,
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,
cried out in a loud voice and said,
"Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
And how does this happen to me,
that the mother of my Lord should come
to me?"

For at the moment the sound of your
greeting reached my ears,
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.
Blessed are you who believed
that what was spoken to you by the Lord
would be fulfilled."



Journal

Record your reflections, either writing
or drawing and anything you have
learned or felt - reflect on

"whatever it is the Lord seems
to be saying in your life,
and how difficult it is to trust".

Sharing and Conversation

Share with others whatever it is the Lord seems to be saying in
your life, and how difficult it is to trust.

God in our hearts

There is an essential Christian insight which Mary Exemplifies in Luke's Gospel:

"Mary reveals the basic simplicity of the Christian response in a poverty of spirit that consists in turning wholly to God, wholly away from self. She knew the power of the Spirit at work in her heart".

Mary way is a reflection of good family living

As a good mother:

she gives generously,
she is strong, resilient, compassionate,
she nurtures, strengthens and unites at all costs.

She is the woman who:

gave birth to Jesus,
who struggles to nurture him, and
taught him to grow into independence.

She is the woman who:

contributed to the birth of the church.
united the believers together, and
believed as the church grew to independence.

These attitudes we can learn from Mary.

To give of ourselves, to be present,
to believe in what we do,
to be strong yet compassionate
to lead ourselves to our full potential.



Song Reflection

"O Holy Night"

Common Prayers

You are invited to share any prayers with those gathered. They can include anything.

Final Prayers

(Repeat these prayers 7 times)

Our Father

Who Art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy Kingdom Come
Thy will be done
On Earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day
Our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary
Full of Grace
The Lord is with you
Blessed Art Thou among women
And Blessed, is the fruit of your womb Jesus
Holy Mary Mother of God
Pray for our sinners now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Glory Be

Glory Be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Spirit.
As it Was in the beginning.
Is now and ever shall be
World without End
Amen.

