



Gospel ([Lk 1:39-56](#))

Mary set out and traveled 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, "Most 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." And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, I believe in your supreme goodness and love. I entrust my entire self to you with all of my hopes, fears and joys. Thank you for giving us the gift of yourself in the Eucharist. Thank you, too, for giving us your own mother to be our mother during our exile on this earth and journey home to you in heaven. Here I am, like her, to do your will.

Petition: Mary, help me to grow in humility.

1. Prompt and Joyful Charity: What has impelled Mary to undertake her perilous journey not only alone, but also in haste? An irresistible force was

acting within Mary: the presence of the Holy Spirit overshadowed and filled her since the moment of the Annunciation. This same Holy Spirit has filled the heart of Elizabeth at Mary's greeting and moved the infant within her womb. What is the first fruit of the fullness of the Holy Spirit? Joy. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI comments on the relationship of joy to the truth who is Christ himself: "Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of truth, attracts to himself the heart of every man, dilates it, and fills it with joy. Only the truth is capable of invading the mind and making it fully joyful. This joy expands the dimensions of the human spirit, raising it from the anxieties of egoism, making it capable of authentic love" (Discourse to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, February 10, 2005).

2. Elizabeth - The Unworthy Host: Elizabeth's moving question reflects the one virtue necessary for a person to be invaded by the Holy Spirit: humility. Elizabeth is profoundly aware of her own lowliness in the face of a visit from the mother of her Lord. Mary herself echoes these sentiments of deep humility throughout her Magnificat. What is the reason her Creator has done great things for her, so much so that all generations will call her blessed? It is not due to any talent or quality she might possess of herself. There is no magnificent grandeur by which she has captivated the Almighty. God has simply "looked upon his handmaid's lowliness." Do I rejoice in my own littleness, knowing that it enables the Holy Spirit to make his dwelling within me and do great things for Christ with my life?

3. The Hymn of God's Praise: Mary is so filled with the Holy Spirit that her whole being bursts forth in a hymn of joy and praise to the Almighty. Pope Emeritus Benedict reflects on Mary's joy at the infant Lord's presence within her womb: "This is the joy the heart feels when we kneel to adore Jesus in faith" (Discourse to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, February 10, 2005). The joy of Christ, the joy of the Holy Spirit, gratitude to God for the great things he has done in us, impels us to bring Our Lord to others, just as Mary brought him to Elizabeth even before his birth. As she sings her Magnificat, Mary does not remain closed within herself, but reflects on what God has done for her in light of his saving plan for all his people. May the joy of the Holy Spirit bring about a new Pentecost that radiates from our lives.

Conversation with Christ: Thank you, Lord! The great gift of your Holy Spirit fills our lives with the unspeakable joy of your own presence within us. Help me to respond with haste -- as Mary did -- to the impulses of charity from the Holy Spirit.

Resolution: I will look for occasions to speak about Christ with others and do acts of charity for them with joy and haste, just as Mary did in the Gospel.