



Diocese of Rockville Centre New Evangelization

"... the Church needs genuine witnesses for the new evangelization: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others. The Church needs saints. All are called to holiness, and holy people alone can renew humanity."

*Pope John Paul II
August 2004*

Volume II, Issue XII

Theme: Mary

May 2008

ENCOUNTER: With The Lord Jesus

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Luke 1: 26-38

For your reflection:

- I. This Scripture passage of the Annunciation is the First Joyful Mystery of the Rosary. Mary encounters God's will for her life. Mary's reaction goes from being "greatly troubled" to "may it be done to me according to your word". What can we learn from Mary as we encounter God's will for our lives?
- II. In "making room" for God's way in her life, Mary was able to "make room" for Jesus in her womb. Her spiritual opening to God had natural and real consequences. What lesson do we learn here about "God's way" in our own lives?
- III. With all that happens to Mary in this encounter with God we list it as the first joyful mystery. Do we reflect the joy of our own encounters with God's will and way for us?

CONVERSION: To The Way Of The Lord

Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart.

Luke 2: 41-51

For your reflection:

- I. This Scripture passage of the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple is the Fifth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary. Mary tells Jesus that what he has done has caused "great anxiety" to her and Joseph. Jesus explains His actions to her. Mary and Joseph are made to confront God's way. As there is "joy" in finding Him, there is more joy in yielding to God's way. When you are made to confront God's way which may be in opposition to your way, is it, in the end, a cause of joy for you?
- II. "Why have you done this to us?" are Mary's words upon finding Jesus in the Temple. Do you use similar words when you struggle in your personal conversion process with the ways of God?
- III. Mary (and Joseph) "did not understand" all Jesus said to them. But Mary "kept all these things in her Heart". Even though you struggle with your conversion to God's will, do you respect His will and not dismiss it?



EUCCHARIST: "I Am Not Worthy To Receive You"

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

John 19: 25-27

For your reflection:

- I. In what ways might you describe the Mass as "standing by the cross of Jesus"?
- II. Imagine Mary's grief in seeing her son on the cross. But Jesus also sees her in her sorrow and pain. At Mass, do you believe that Jesus may also be said to see you from His Cross as you bring before the altar all you are and all you are experiencing?
- III. Seeing Mary's broken heart, Jesus gives her John and gives John, Mary. In giving us himself in Holy Communion, Jesus not only gives us Himself but also gives us to one another. He does this through the offering of his own Body and Blood which forge a deep and profound union among believers. Are you aware of this real union with all your sisters and brothers as you receive Jesus in The Holy Eucharist?

HOLINESS: "So Be Perfect As Your Heavenly Father Is Perfect"

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."

Luke 1: 46-55

For your reflection:

- I. In Mary's hymn of praise, her Magnificat, we perceive that the best view of God's holiness is from the vantage point of our lowliness! Are we indifferent to God's holiness due to our own self-exaltation?
- II. The first step on the path to holiness is to recognize God as one's Saviour. How is God's salvation necessary for you?
- III. This hymn of praise which speaks of holiness also emphasizes God's mercy and justice. All three, holiness, mercy and justice, necessarily go together. We need to remember this as we set out on the path of our own pursuit of holiness of life.

MISSION: "You Are Witnesses Of These Things"

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. When they entered the city they went to the upper room where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Acts of the Apostles 1: 12-14

For your reflection:

- I. The missionary activity of the Church is described in the entire Book of Acts. Notice how this mission begins? With the apostles gathered around Mary in prayer in the upper room. What do these brief verses teach us about the mission of the Church?
- II. As the apostles are about to fulfill Jesus' command to go out to all nations and baptize, they gather with Mary. Does the Blessed Mother have a permanent place in your prayer life?
- III. Knowing more about Mary's life (and ours?) as a result of these reflections, what do we receive from her to help us be effective evangelizers of the Gospel of her son?



New Evangelization Guide
is published monthly
and is available on:
www.drc.org/newevangelization.html

Secretariat for the
New Evangelization
Diocese of Rockville Centre
P.O. Box 9023
Rockville Centre, NY 11571
(516) 678-5800 x309
rfigliozzi@drc.org