

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Annunciation

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she is to be the Mother of our Savior. Mary humbly asks an honest question: “How can this be since I am a virgin?” The angel responds, “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.” Mary answers simply: “Behold, I am the Handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Mary’s “yes” filled her with joy as the Holy Spirit came upon her. May we trust that the Holy Spirit will lead us and guide us as we say “yes” to live out our call to follow Jesus.

2. The Visitation

Mary enters the house of her cousin Elizabeth. At the sound of her greeting, the infant leaps in Elizabeth’s womb. Elizabeth says to Mary: “Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” We are inspired not only by Mary’s humility but by her absolute trust that what the Lord promised would indeed come about. As John the Baptist – in Elizabeth’s womb – leaped for joy at the arrival of Mary, may we find cause for joy as we pray to Mary

3. The Nativity

At the decree of Caesar Augustus, Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem to be enrolled. Then Mary gives birth to her firstborn son, wrapping him in swaddling clothes and laying him in a manger. St. Francis says that we give birth to Christ as we bring Christ to the world. We can do this when we are open to His presence in our own hearts. Jesus is the Word made Flesh. May we give birth to Christ and bring him to the world – each and every day by the way we live.

4. The Presentation

Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to consecrate him to the Lord. There, a devout and righteous man named Simeon was awaiting “the consolation of Israel. It had been revealed to Simeon ... that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord.” Simeon said, “Behold this child is destined for the rise and fall of many in Israel, and to be a sign that shall be contradicted.” Along with Simeon, we too have been introduced to the long-awaited Messiah. May the Holy Spirit show us how to welcome and respond to him.

5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

After a trip to Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph realize that Jesus was not with them. Returning, they find Jesus in the Temple, listening to the teachers and asking questions. Mary says to him , “Son, why have you done this to us?” Jesus answers, “Why were you looking for me? Did you know that I must be in my Father’s house?” Jesus was doing the work of his Father. May we be true to who we are called to be and to act on our call in all the circumstances of our lives.