

# Women of Faith

ST. CECILIA + MISSION CONCEPCION

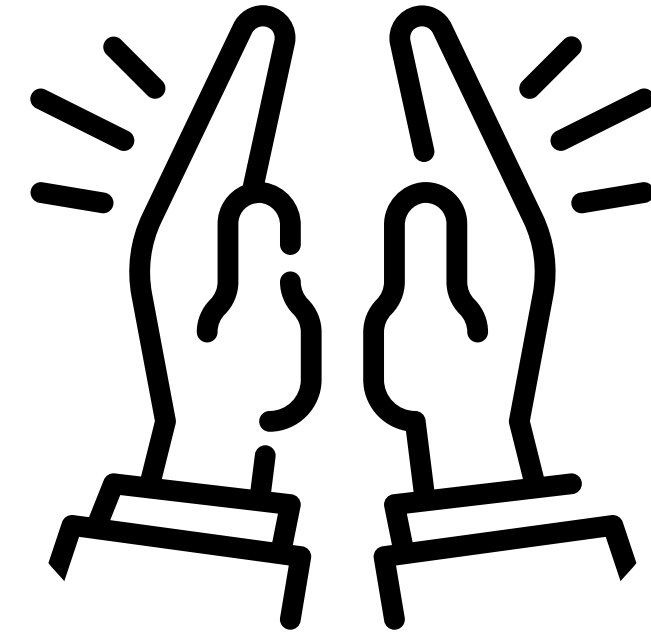


# Mary:

## The Visitation

Luke 1:39-56





BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

# wrap-up

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- ▶ Mary comes from an obscure/ insignificant village
- ▶ She is a virgin
- ▶ She is betrothed to Joseph, from the house of David (the intended lineage of the Messiah)

# Angel Gabriel reveals Mary's mission

- ▶ She is called to be the mother of the Messiah (30-33)
- ▶ The child is conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit (34-35)
- ▶ The child will be the holy "Son of God" (35)
- ▶ *"With God nothing will be impossible"*  
Mary is informed of Elizabeth's miraculous pregnancy (37)
- ▶ Mary describes herself as a servant of the Lord who ardently seeks to do God's will (38)







# The Visitation



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# The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was **Elizabeth**. Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years.

Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God, according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him.



Luke 1:5-25



But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. **Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John.** And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of [the] Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. **He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord.**” Then Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” And the angel said to him in reply, “I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to

announce to you this good news. But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time.”

Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was gesturing to them but remained mute.

Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home. After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying, “So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others.”

Luke 1:5-25



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# Blessed Among Women

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.

## MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

During those days 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.”



Luke 1:38-45

Why do you think Mary goes  
"with haste" (verse 39)?  
What might this reveal  
about her character?





# Blessed are you among women

ONLY TWO OTHER WOMEN IN THE BIBLE ARE GIVEN  
THIS KIND OF PRAISE.

**JAEL & JUDITH**

# Why?





Then Uzziah said to her, “Blessed are you, daughter, by the Most High God, above all the women on earth; and blessed be the Lord God, the creator of heaven and earth, who guided your blow at the head of the leader of our enemies.



Judith 13:18

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**Most blessed of women is Jael**, the wife of Heber the Kenite, blessed among tent-dwelling women! He asked for water, she gave him milk, in a princely bowl she brought him curds. With her hand she reached for the peg, with her right hand, the workman's hammer. She hammered Sisera, crushed his head; she smashed, pierced his temple.

Judges 5:24-26

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I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; They will strike at your head, while you strike at their heel.

## enmity

the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something.

Genesis 3:15

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Given this, why might **Mary** be associated with **Jael** and **Judith**?

What do you think she has in common with these heroines of the Old Testament who also are described as "blessed among women"?



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## ARAUNAH SAID TO DAVID

Then Araunah asked, “Why does my lord the king come to his servant?” David replied, “To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people.”

2 Samuel 24:21

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# "the mother of my Lord"

- a. To whom is the expression "my Lord" addressed in this 2 Samuel 24:21?
- b. In light of this background, what is Elizabeth saying about Mary when she addresses her as "the mother of my Lord"?



# the queen mother

The mother of the king played an important role in the Davidic kingdom in the Old Testament: that of the **queen mother**.

*Note the ways in which the Bible depicts the authority of the mother of the king.*





## DAVID'S SON SOLOMON IS NAMED KING

Then Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, and the king stood up to meet her and paid her homage. Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king's mother, who sat at his right.

1 Kings 2:19-20

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Then Jehoiachin, king of Judah, together with his mother, his ministers, officers, and functionaries, surrendered to the king of Babylon, who, in the eighth year of his reign, took him captive.

2 Kings 24:12

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The words of Lemuel, king of Massa,  
the instruction his mother taught him:

What are you doing, my son!

what are you doing, son of my womb;

what are you doing, son of my vows!

Do not give your vigor to women, or  
your strength to those who ruin kings.

It is not for kings, Lemuel, not for  
kings to drink wine; strong drink is  
not for princes,

Lest in drinking they forget what has  
been decreed, and violate the rights  
of any who are in need.

Give strong drink to anyone who is  
perishing, and wine to the  
embittered;

When they drink, they will forget their  
misery, and think no more of their  
troubles.

Open your mouth in behalf of the  
mute, and for the rights of the  
destitute;

Open your mouth, judge justly,  
defend the needy and the poor!

Who can find a woman of worth? Far  
beyond jewels is her value.

Proverbs 31:1-10



"Hail Mary, full of  
grace, the Lord is  
with thee. Blessed art  
thou among women  
and blessed is the  
fruit of thy womb,  
Jesus"





This twofold movement of prayer to Mary has found a privileged expression in the Ave Maria: Hail Mary [or Rejoice, Mary]: the greeting of the angel Gabriel opens this prayer. It is God himself who, through his angel as intermediary, greets Mary. Our prayer dares to take up this greeting to Mary with the regard God had for the lowliness of his humble servant and to exult in the joy he finds in her.

Full of grace, the Lord is with thee: These two phrases of the angel's greeting shed light on one another. Mary is full of grace because the Lord is with her. The grace with which she is filled is the presence of him who is the source of all grace. "Rejoice . . . O Daughter of Jerusalem . . . the Lord your God is in your midst." Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the ark of the



covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is "the dwelling of God . . . with men." Full of grace, Mary is wholly given over to him who has come to dwell in her and whom she is about to give to the world.

Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. After the angel's greeting, we make Elizabeth's greeting our own. "Filled with the Holy Spirit," Elizabeth is the first in the long succession of generations who have called Mary "blessed." "Blessed is she who believed. . . ." Mary is "blessed among women" because she believed in the fulfillment of the Lord's word. Abraham, because of his faith, became a blessing for all the nations of the earth. Mary, because of her faith, became the mother of believers, through whom all nations of the earth receive him who is God's own blessing: Jesus, the "fruit of thy womb."

CCC 2676







Holy Mary, Mother of God: With Elizabeth we marvel, "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Because she gives us Jesus, her son, Mary is Mother of God and our mother; we can entrust all our cares and petitions to her: she prays for us as she prayed for herself: "Let it be to me according to your word." By entrusting ourselves to her prayer, we abandon ourselves to the will of God together with her: "Thy will be done."

Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death: By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the "Mother of Mercy," the All-Holy One. We give ourselves over to her now, in the Today of our lives. And our trust broadens further, already at the present moment, to surrender "the hour of our death" wholly to her care. May she be there as she was at her son's death on the cross. May she welcome us as our mother at the hour of our passing to lead us to her son, Jesus, in paradise.

CCC 2677

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# The Magnificat

**LUKE 1:46-55**

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# The Canticle of Mary.

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

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- a. In verses 46-49, who is the recipient of God's blessings, and how has this person been blessed?
  - b. In the second half of Mary's prayer (verses 50-55), the focus changes. Who receives God's blessing in verses 50-55, and how?
  - c. Think About It: What do you think might be the connection between the first and second halves of Mary's prayer?





# Ark of the Covenant



"The Virgin Mary is the living shrine of the Word of God, the Ark of the New and Eternal Covenant. ... In the womb of the new daughter of Zion, the Lord establishes his perfect temple in order to have full communion with mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. *The Shrine: Memory, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God* 18.







Then David and all the people who were with him set out for Baala of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which bears the name “the LORD of hosts enthroned above the cherubim.”



David became frightened of the LORD that day, and he said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me?” So David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD with him into the City of David. David deposited it instead at the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household. When it was reported to King David that the LORD had blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he possessed because of the ark of God, David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the City of David with joy.

As soon as the bearers of the ark of the LORD had advanced six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. Then David came dancing before the LORD with abandon, girt with a linen ephod. David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts of joy and sound of horn. As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal, daughter of Saul, looked down from her window, and when she saw King David jumping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

2 Samuel 6:2, 9-16

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During those days 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.



Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Luke 1:39-43, 56

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2 Samuel 6:2, 9-16</b> <b>David and the Ark of the Covenant</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:39-43, 56</b> <b>Mary on Her Way to See Elizabeth</b></p>
<p><b>Where is the Ark of the Covenant? (verse 2)</b> The Ark is in Baale-judah (which refers to the hill country of Judah).</p>	<p><b>To where is Mary traveling? (verse 39)</b> Mary is going to a city in the hill country of Judea (Judah)</p>
<p><b>What question does David ask about the Ark? (verse 9)</b></p>	<p><b>What does Elizabeth ask about Mary? (verse 43)</b></p>
<p><b>Where does the Ark stay? (verse 10)</b></p>	<p><b>Where does Mary stay? (verse 40)</b></p>
<p><b>How long does the Ark stay there? (verse 11)</b></p>	<p><b>How long does Mary stay there? (verse 56)</b></p>
<p><b>How does David react to the LORD's presence in the Ark? (verse 16)</b></p>	<p><b>How does the baby in Elizabeth's womb react to the Lord's presence in Mary? (verse 41)</b></p>



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Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

CCC 2676

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# DISCUSSION

- In what ways has God looked upon our lowliness?
- How has He done great things for you?

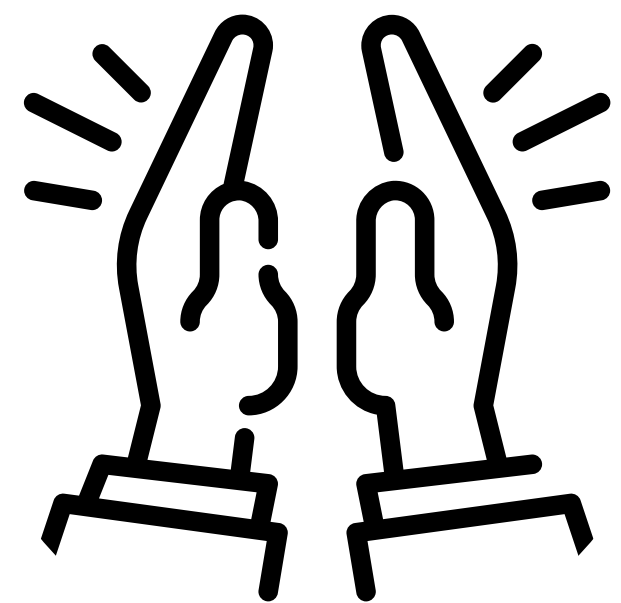


# Readings for August



## **The Nativity:**

- ▶ Luke 2: 1-19
- ▶ Genesis 37: 5-11
- ▶ Proverbs 3: 1-2
- ▶ Psalm 119:11
- ▶ Micah 5:2-4  
(NAB 5:1-3)
- ▶ Luke 23: 53
- ▶ CCC 495, 563 & 725
- ▶ 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10



CLOSING: THE PRAYER OF MARY

# The Magnificat

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My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.

Glory be to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen**