

Meditation on Mary and the Transformation of the Church

Reader: Vatican II, returning to the scriptures, described the church as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, called by Christ to be the new people of God. In emphasizing the common priesthood of the faithful, the Council identified the priestly character of all God's people, calling the church to live as a people consecrated to God.

David Cere tells us, "Priesthood expresses the fundamental human vocation 'of all disciples'...the gift of self to God." This gift of self does not happen in a vacuum, but arises out of disciples' awareness that they have been called, chosen, and loved by God. Mary shows us the way.

From the first moment of her "Yes" to God at the annunciation, Mary freely consented to co-operate in the mission of Jesus, her Son. She shared fully in Christ's priesthood through her faith in God and her willingness to be transformed into a disciple of Jesus. She also shared in His suffering and death on the cross, and in the continued offering of herself in union with the disciples at Pentecost, and in the early Christian community.

Reflector: For Mary, sharing in the priesthood of Jesus was at the heart of her sense of self as a servant of God. This great act of love was service patterned on the mission of Jesus, the Servant of God Himself. It comes by offering ourselves to God, in union with Jesus moment by moment, as we carry out our duties relative to our personal vocation.

Let us echo Mary's Magnificat as we profess our belief and trust that through our faith in Jesus and through the power of the Spirit, we can do the work that Jesus calls us to do: to be the compassionate, healing and merciful presence of God in the world.

All: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has looked with favour on His lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, He has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for He has remembered His promise of mercy, the promise He made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.

Hymn: "You Are Mine" BB # 497 verses 3 and 4