

**WUCWO General Assembly, Arlington, Virginia, USA**  
**Prayer service for Monday June 5, 2006**

*We Walk in the Footsteps of Mary*

**Song:** “Lord, You Give the Great Commission” (CBW III #691, verses 1 and 2)

1. Lord, you give the great commission:  
“Heal the sick and preach the word.”  
Lest the church neglect its mission,  
And the gospel go unheard,  
Help us witness to your purpose  
With renewed integrity;

*Refrain*            With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
                         For the work of ministry.

2. Lord, you call us to your service:  
“In my name baptize and teach.”  
That the world may trust your promise,  
Life abundant meant for each,  
Give us all new fervor, draw us  
Closer in community:

**Voice 1:** Let us join our voices to those of the angels at Bethlehem as we say:

**All:** “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom He is pleased!” (Luke 2:14)

**Voice 2:** Mary was the first woman to find favour with God, let us walk in her footsteps.

**Voice 3:** “In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth ...and Mary remained with her about three months and then returned home.” (Luke 1:3, 56)

**Voice 1:** Elizabeth was probably very embarrassed to find herself pregnant at such an advanced age. She hid herself away. And yet at the same time, she was delighted to be blessed with a child. Mary came in joy to share her secret and to help her elder cousin prepare for this big change in her life.

*When I hear of someone’s good news, do I run to share their joy, to help them adjust to their great blessing? Can I help them come to a peaceful acceptance of the task ahead?*

**LS:** My soul proclaims your greatness, O my God,

**RS:** and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.

**LS:** For your regard has blessed me, poor and a serving woman.

**RS:** From this day all generations will call me blessed,  
**LS:** for You, who are mighty, have done great things for me;  
**RS:** and holy is Your name.  
**LS:** Your mercy is on those who fear You,  
**RS:** from generation to generation.  
**LS:** You have shown strength with Your arm.  
**RS:** You have scattered the proud in their hearts' conceit.  
**LS:** You have put down the mighty from their thrones,  
**RS:** and have lifted up the lowly.  
**LS:** You have filled the hungry with good things,  
**RS:** and have sent the rich away empty.  
**LS:** You have helped Your servant Israel,  
**RS:** remembering Your mercy,  
**LS:** as You promised to Abraham and Sarah,  
**RS:** mercy to their children forever.

*The People's Companion to the Breviary: The Liturgy of the Hours with Inclusive Language* (Indianapolis: Carmelites of Indianapolis, 1997), printed on the inside back cover.

**Song:** Lord, you make the common holy:  
 "This is my body, this is my blood."  
 Let us all, for earth's true glory,  
 Daily lift life heavenward,  
 Asking that the world around us  
 Share your children's liberty:

*Refrain*            With the Spirit's gifts empower us  
                           For the work of ministry.

**Voice 2:** From both the Magnificat and this verse of the song, we see that God is found in the little things. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to "make the common holy," to read the signs of our times and to witness to the coming of His kingdom in ordinary life.

*Is there a situation in my life where Mary is advising me to "do whatever He tells you"? Simple unobtrusive things can make the world a better place. Can I lay these foundations of peace?*

**Voice 3:** Mary followed Jesus in His years of ministry, concerned about His well-being, and drew strength from her faith. Nourished by the sacraments of faith, *do I concern myself with the plight of the poor, the suffering, the hungry and the oppressed around me?*

**Voice 1:** Justice brings peace. Lord, make us instruments of your peace!

**LS:** Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

**RS:** where there is injury, pardon;

**LS:** where there is discord, unity;

**RS:** where there is doubt, faith;

**LS:** where there is error, truth;

**RS:** where there is despair, hope;

**LS:** where there is sadness, joy:

**RS:** where there is darkness, light.

**LS:** Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

**RS:** to be consoled as to console;

**LS:** to be understood as to understand;

**RS:** to be loved as to love.

**LS:** For it is in giving that we receive;

**RS:** it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

**All:** and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life!

**Voice 1:** Mary remained always near Jesus, especially during his suffering and death.

*Can I accompany someone on his or her final journey? In doing so, I may become an instrument of peace for them. Yes Lord, use me, give me Your soothing words, allow Your mercy and love to flow through me!*

**Voice 2:** After the resurrection of her Son, Mary remained with His followers. Pentecost sent the disciples forth, afire with God's love.

*Can I wait patiently for the light of the Holy Spirit to be revealed? Peace is a gift. Can I be a woman of patience, tranquility, safety, hope, openness, loyalty, truth, faith and love? Can I be a woman of peace?*

**All:** King of Peace, in the journey of the church, You have set forth the Blessed Virgin Mary as a bright sign; through her intercession, sustain our faith and revive our hope, so that led by love, we may walk with courage in the way of the gospel as we witness to Your kingdom of peace. You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

**Hymn:** “Lord, You Give the Great Commission” (CBW III #691, verses 4 and 5)

4. Lord, you show us love’s true measure:  
“Father, what they do, forgive.”  
Yet we hoard as private treasure  
All that you so freely give.  
May your care and mercy lead us  
To a just society;

*Refrain*            With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
                          For the work of ministry.

5. Lord, you bless with words assuring:  
“I am with you to the end.”  
Faith and hope and love restoring,  
May we serve as you intend,  
And, amid the cares that claim us,  
Hold in mind eternity;