

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



THE GOSPEL. [Luke 1:39-56](#)

*Mary set out and traveled to the hill country
in haste to a town of Judah.*

From a serene, demurring handmaiden,
when she met her cousin Elizabeth
came a cry in unrestrained joy,
and praising God.

Singing a radical song of promise.

Spirit of God,
let us join with Mary
and declare your greatness,
and with whole heart's delight, pray with her:

that you give hope to the lowly, that they be lifted up:
a wealth of good food for all the hungry,
enlightenment and desire, to repair
all that is broken in the planet
and in the justice systems,
with your mercy
for all people
in all times.

THE FIRST READING. [Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab](#)

*God's temple in heaven was opened,
and the ark of his covenant could be seen in the temple.*

David danced
and sang before the ark.
Jesus danced within the womb of Mary.
The covenant, no longer stone, now flesh within her.

Lord,
are my brothers and sisters who give you flesh
made brilliant by your nativity within them?
Though it is often hard to see their light,
we sometimes feel their warmth.
Should we dance when we
meet them and sing
when we greet
them?

THE SECOND READING. [1 Corinthians 15:20-27](#)

*For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ
all shall be brought to life*

God,
complete your work in us
that you may be
all in all.

When we die,
bring us to life in you.

ANNIE OSBIECK

REFLECTION: John Foley S.J.

The more we talk the less we listen.

Truly listen, I mean. If we talk all the time, our energy is taken up by our own thoughts and actions and effects. We miss one of the greatest treasures of all: the beauty of other people in their complexity and in their simplicity and their interiority.

Alright, should we then just sit in silence and let others talk? No, no. We must take care to exchange with others. To talk, yes, but also to listen.

All true relationships, be they societal niceties or deep friendships, are founded on receiving and giving. We give the gift of attention to the other, and we receive it back from them.

That being said, the [Gospel](#) surely gives us a test case. Why does the newly pregnant Mary talk so much this Sunday? She has hurried to her cousin Elizabeth's house in the

hill country, and hardly have they even said hello when Mary bursts into a long speech or song, the Magnificat. In it she even says that all generations are going to call her blessed! Talking about herself, so it seems.

But examine the words just before the Magnificat. Mary is actually responding to what Elizabeth has just said. *“You are the mother of my Lord! Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”*

In return Mary does let excited words pour from her mouth.

The Magnificat is not about Mary, it is entirely about God. She will be blessed by all generations, she says, not at all because she is herself something great, but because God’s love and mercy are, and they will pour out through her to the world. Mary had a lifelong habit of listening to God’s love. She sensed the Holy Spirit when she received it. Her reaction? To speak the divine Word into the world. She is the great example of hearing and then speaking.

The feast of the Assumption salutes this trust and openness in Mary. At the end she had been at one with God all her life, even in the searing passion and death of her son. The Assumption is not a mythical statement of fancy, it is an acknowledgment of how close Mary had been to Jesus all life long, and especially in his death.

