

*Pondering in our Heart*  
**Scriptural Reflections on Mary**

**Mystery of Encounter - The Visitation (Lk 1:39-56)**

***Text***

*Mary set out at that time and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.*

*Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women, you are the most blessed and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'*

*And Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;  
because he has looked upon the humiliation of his servant. Yes, from now  
onwards all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name,  
and his faithful love extends age after age to those who fear him.  
He has used the power of his arm, he has routed the arrogant of heart.  
He has pulled down princes from their thrones and raised high the lowly.  
He has filled the starving with good things, sent the rich away empty.  
He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his faithful love  
- according to the promise he made to our ancestors - of his mercy to Abraham  
and to his descendants forever.*

*Mary stayed with Elizabeth some three months and then went home.*

***Pondering the Word***

- What do you think Elizabeth's greeting meant to Mary? Notice that Elizabeth is the first person in Scripture to call Mary "*mother of my Lord*" (Lk 1:43). How did Elizabeth recognise this?
- What phrases and adjectives does Mary use in her canticle of praise to describe God and his actions towards her? To describe herself? What do her words reveal about her attitude towards God? Towards herself?

### ***For Personal Reflection***

- In what ways do you recognise the hidden presence of Jesus around you? How do you respond to this presence?
- Do you hurry to help other people when you become aware of a need?
- Elizabeth was honoured at Mary's visit. What would make you feel honoured?
- *My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; because.....* What would you include in *your* prayer of thanksgiving for all that God has done and continues to do in your life? Make up your own prayer of praise glorifying God for his actions in your life.

### ***Prayer***

*For your choice of Elizabeth,  
pregnant much later than she dreamed;  
for your choice of Mary,  
pregnant much sooner than she expected:  
we bless you, Father, with a full heart.*

*We pray for all pregnant mothers:  
that they may be secure and safe  
in heart and mind and body;  
that they may be strengthened  
for the responsibility ahead of them,  
and know the consolation of loving support.*

*We pray for all mothers:  
that they may always delight in the presence  
of the children entrusted to their safe-keeping;  
that they may be a shelter for them  
and a source of love and wisdom.*

*We pray for all children:  
that they may grow in the security of family life  
and experience their dignity as children of God.  
May they always stay connected to their parents  
in true affection and respect.*