



DAY FOR LIFE

2011

Homily Notes: The Visitation

31 MAY 2011

Today the Church calls us to focus on the value of human life.

On this Day for Life the word of God directs us toward happiness and where the fulfilment of our desires is to be found.

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Visitation. Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth.

The Visitation takes place immediately after the Annunciation.

Mary is asked to be the mother of the Saviour and she conceives the Lord in her womb. "Let what you have said be done to me."

After this overwhelming revelation Mary's first thought is not for herself, her first reaction is to go and be of service to someone else.

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. Immediately her response is to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She stayed with her about three months.

Mary can teach us about the effects of true prayer. When we encounter the Lord in prayer whether in solitude and silence or at Mass or when praying with others if it is genuine prayer, a genuine encounter with others then it will inspire us to serve others.

If we have truly encountered the Lord then we will be turned outward to the needs of others.

When Elizabeth greets Mary she says "Yes blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

To live by faith is to believe that God will fulfil his promises. And what are those promises?

Mary is the woman of faith who lives by God's word. She puts her trust not only in the Angel's word that she will be the mother of the Lord but in all Gods' promises.

We hear what Gods promises are in Mary's prayer, the Magnificat:

He has routed the proud of heart.

He has pulled down princes from their thrones
and exalted the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away.'

Our culture tells us that this is not true that we have to make ourselves secure.

Society teaches us that if we buy the right things have enough money in the bank then we will be secure.

But the truth is that the only security we can have is in God and in his faithfulness to us. In the midst of the present recession the Gospel re-orientates us.

It teaches us that it is trust in God that will fulfil our desires.

On this Day for life Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth is an example to us to put our faith into action.

And the action we can take is to bear witness to faith in God. In sharing what we have with the poor, by care of the elderly and the dying, by working to protect those in the womb.

As the prophet Zephaniah says in the first reading:

"When that day comes, have no fear do not let your hands fall limp."

The day has come.

Do not let your hands fall limp but put your faith into action and, like Mary, be of service to your brothers and sisters.

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