

Let us pray:

Purify our conscience O Lord by the visitation of thy Holy Spirit; that when thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ cometh in His most Holy Sacrament of the Altar He may find in us a mansion prepared for Himself, who liveth and reigneth One God world without end.

Amen

That He may find in us....

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost +

On this Sunday we read of the Visitation of the Angel to Blessed Mother of Our Lord. There are several things we Anglican Catholics can do on this Sunday. First, we might just pretend that we do not need to hear anything about the Blessed Virgin Mary. After all we are not Roman Catholic. But that would be a mistake.

First, the Creed proclaims the place of the Blessed Mother in the economy of salvation as does the Bible. And second, the BCP has one Saint that has two feast days, only one – Want to guess who?

If we should not ignore the Blessed Mother of our Lord, then we Anglican Catholics might try and diminish the role of Mary, what she did and how her life was transformed by the Holy Ghost. Both these reactions, wanting to ignore or wanting to diminish the role of Mary are understandable when we consider the opposite reaction in the Roman Church.

Anglican Catholics have always had a much more Biblical and healthy understanding of the Role of the Mary as the Blessed Mother and as an example of discipleship. That she is due all honors, except divinity. That is how we should understand Mary; as the one who bore the Christ Child in her womb, who gave Jesus the human nature he possesses. And throughout her life, as much as is recorded in the Bible, we understand her to have been a faithful woman and later a faithful disciple of her son.

So with that understanding let's spend a few moments thinking about what we can learn from the Blessed Mother and what of her attributes we may wish to emulate.

Mary to open to God - Some might think this an understatement or something so obvious as to be dismissed as simple. However, Mary was open to God in every aspect of her being. How do we know? The Bible tells us that the Angel appeared to her and told her she would be the Mother of God. That she would conceive the child by the Holy Ghost overshadowing her and her response was: let it be done unto me according to thy word.

I don't know about you but I am not sure what I would do if an Angel appeared to me. I hope I would respond in faith as Mary did. I hope I would not think I was hallucinating. And I pray that I would believe whatever I was told. But, if we think about that question our rational minds can takeover and we might dismiss the event as not real.

Mary had a rational mind. She was logical and ordered in her thinking. She even asks that Angel how she will become pregnant because she has no husband. But that logical order mind did not prevent her from believing and allowing herself to be open to possibilities of God working through her.

Mary was willing to live in God's Time, she was patient and trusting. How do we know? Twice in the Gospel of Luke this phrase is repeated. In her heart – Mary pondered these things: Mary kept these things in her heart.

The Blessed Mother had been told what would happen and she waited patiently as they unfolded in her life. That Angels filled the sky singing at her son's birth, that Anna and Simeon blessed the child and proclaimed Him as the fulfillment of Israel. That Jesus was in His Father's House, teaching the scribes and the teachers of Israel. All these things Mary kept in her heart knowing that in God's Time all would be fulfilled. His Time, His Creation, His Plan; for He is God and she is the handmaid.

Finally, Mary is faithful. Again we need only to read what is recorded in the Bible to realize that Mary was faithful throughout her life. Not only caring for the infant Jesus, raising the Child, but also in the work of His Ministry. Mary was faithful to God and plan that was revealed to her.

A was Mary who told the servants to "do whatever He says" at the Wedding at Cana which began His ministry. And it was Mary who stood with the other women when He died on the Cross. It was the Blessed Mother, we read in the Acts of the Apostles, who gathered with the disciples in prayer and support of each other.

Mary was open to God, she was willing to live in God's time and Him to be God and for her to be His handmaid. Mary the Mother of God was faithful to the promise she made to be His mother, faithful even to standing at foot of His Cross. Mary became the chosen vessel of the Lord by saying "be it unto me according o thy will". And God used her in a way she could never have imagined.

We too are to become the vessels whereby God enters again into the world. Not because God needs us to, but because we need to become the instruments of God we were created to be. This is what we learn from the Blessed Mother of our Lord: To be open, to wait for God and to be faithful.

When we do, God will live in us and we in Him and it will be the most transformative experience in our lives. Transformative so that we, by God's Grace, may transform the world.

Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee, and may we be open, faithful and patient to allow Him to be with us.