

This week we will continue our topic on: **“All generations will call me blessed” (Lk 1:48)** and learn from Mary the importance of living as Christ’s suitable helpers. Mary will teach us how she longs for her children to live fullness of life and that this is what moves her to intercede for us and ask Christ to make up for what is lacking in our world. She believes that Christ has the power to transform every situation from dryness, emptiness, humiliation, sadness, distress, injustice and disorder to one that is overflowing with the abundance of charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

Day 1 Luke 17:7-9 "Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, "Come and have your meal at once"? Would he not be more likely to say, "Get my supper ready; fasten your belt and wait on me while I eat and drink. You yourself can eat and drink afterwards"? Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, "We are useless servants: we have done no more than our duty."

Mary, God’s servant, lives every situation as his servant, even when she is an invited guest at the wedding of Cana. As his servant, she is attentive to what is lacking and needs to be served. Mary was the one who noticed that they had run out of wine and she informed Jesus. She was sensitive to the humiliation of the couple whose guests were perhaps complaining. Mary longed for Jesus to intervene, to make up for what was lacking at the wedding feast so that the joy and harmony could be restored, so that the day could be lived as a celebration rather than a humiliation.

In prayer, we are invited to ask Mary: Mary do you also long for Jesus to intervene today, to make up for what is lacking among your children, the lack of respect, the lack of generosity, the lack of communication, the lack of truth, the lack of forgiveness and hope, etc? What do you see Mary that is still lacking? Where do you see a need for Jesus to intervene? We are also invited to allow Mary to encourage us to make ourselves available to serve

Jesus’ freely given love that we have experienced in our hearts, eg. to be self-giving in a way that doesn’t expect a reward, to be generous even if there has been no thankyou, to continue to show warm hospitality even after there has been an inappropriate behaviour, etc.

Day 2 Genesis 2:18-23 “Yahweh God said, ‘It is not right that the man should be alone. I shall make him a helper.’ So from the soil Yahweh God fashioned all the wild animals and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild animals. But no helper suitable for the man was found for him. Then, Yahweh God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And, while he was asleep, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh up again forthwith. Yahweh God fashioned the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. And the man said: This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! She is to be called Woman, because she was taken from Man.”

At the wedding of Cana, Jesus referred to Mary his mother as “**woman**”, affirming her as his suitable helper in establishing the kingdom of God. Jesus also created each one of us to be his suitable helpers but this requires that we discover and accept the specific role that Christ wants to give us in every situation.

In prayer, we are invited to take a moment to contemplate our first parents in the garden of Eden and the specific role assigned to them by God: “**Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that move on earth**” (Genesis 1:28). Begin a dialogue with God about how you can be a master of creation in the same way that Mary and Jesus were rather than falling into the temptation of disobeying God’s instructions like Adam and Eve did. Is there a situation you are facing where you experience disorder in creation and a need for Jesus to perform a miracle? Ask him how he needs you to first master your negativity, anger or lack of hope so that through

you he can continue to love and give of himself in order to bring about a transformation.

Day 3 1 Corinthians 10:12-14 “...None of the trials which have come upon you is more than a human being can stand. You can trust that God will not let you be put to the test beyond your strength, but with any trial will also provide a way out by enabling you to put up with it...”

Mary, a woman of faith in God as the source of eternal life and love, hoped only in Christ as the answer for the shortage of wine at the wedding of Cana. She believed that Jesus was the “**way out**” for the couple who had no wine and she believes he is also the way out for every child in the world.

In prayer, imagine Mary by your side and share with her a situation in your life or in the world that seems impossible to be transformed. What is Mary’s response to you? Allow her to encourage you to ask Jesus for help. Does Jesus perceive in you the same faith as Mary to perform a miracle? Does he see you believing that he is the answer to your current difficulty? Let Jesus remind you that God will provide you with adequate grace to deal with your situation because he is just but that you need to imitate him and follow his instructions for a miracle to occur.

Day 4 Matthew 7:13-14 “Enter by the narrow gate, since the road that leads to destruction is wide and spacious, and many take it; but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”

Sometimes when we face difficulties in our life, we can become complacent and settle for the “**wide and spacious**” road that everyone else seems to have taken rather than to do the seemingly ridiculous thing that Christ asks of us, eg. to no longer plan our day with God as our first priority, to not make room for others needs when we have a long “to-do” list, to give up patiently loving someone who is hostile towards us, to no longer persist in saying no to a bad habit even when we are feeling empty and sad as a long-term consequence, etc.

In prayer, allow Mary to remind you of the importance of accepting the “**hard road**” of practising the virtues day after

day, even when the rest of society appear to be indulging in lawlessness. Mary will reassure you that the “life” that God’s road leads to is worth it!

Day 5 Romans 12:14-21 “Bless your persecutors; never curse them, bless them. Rejoice with others when they rejoice, and be sad with those in sorrow. Give the same consideration to all others alike. Pay no regard to social standing, but meet humble people on their own terms. Do not congratulate yourself on your own wisdom. Never pay back evil with evil, but bear in mind the ideals that all regard with respect. As much as possible, and to the utmost of your ability, be at peace with everyone. Never try to get revenge; leave that, my dear friends, to the Retribution. As scripture says: Vengeance is mine - I will pay them back, the Lord promises. And more: If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat; if thirsty, something to drink. By this, you will be heaping red-hot coals on his head. Do not be mastered by evil, but master evil with good.”

Today’s scripture passage points out very clearly some of the ordinary things that Jesus asks of us as his servants. They are not humanly impossible but difficult when we are used to living as our own master, eg. used to being lazy, proud, selfish, etc.

In prayer, let Mary strengthen your faith in the miracle of Jesus transforming the world if you decide serve him by obeying his instructions. Dialogue with Jesus about which aspect of today’s scripture is difficult for you to obey and allow him to assure you that he will help you to carry it out, especially in your weakest moment.

Day 6 Luke 12:35-40 “See that you have your belts done up and your lamps lit. Be like people waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. In truth I tell you, he will do up his belt, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch that he comes, or in the third, but blessed are those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what time the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

What is a servant who is “awake” like? Are they just lying in bed with their eyes open? Or sitting around idol watching TV and planning their next holiday? Or strolling through the garden day-dreaming? Mary is the model of a servant who lived “awake”, not only attentive to others, but proactive in taking the initiative to resolve situations of need with Christ.

In prayer, allow Mary to encourage you to not only be more attentive to the needs around you but to be open to how God is calling you to respond. Are you prepared to let Mary tell you “Do **WHATEVER** he tells you” in your journey of life today?

Day 7 Matthew 14:14-20 "Jesus replied, 'There is no need for them to go: give them something to eat yourselves.' But they answered, 'All we have with us is five loaves and two fish.' So he said, 'Bring them here to me.' He gave orders that the people were to sit down on the grass; then he took the five loaves and the two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing. And breaking the loaves he handed them to his disciples, who gave them to the crowds. They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected the scraps left over, twelve baskets full."

The disciples witnessed Jesus’ abundant generosity when he performed his miracles. However, what was necessary on their part for the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes to take place? They needed to offer all that they had to Jesus.

In prayer, spend some time allowing God to remind you of all that he has given you, eg. your physical life, health, intelligence, capacities, faith, family, friends, studies, work experience, material wealth, love, etc. Are you prepared to give all that you have to God for God to then bring about an abundant miracle in the world? Ask your mother Mary to learn from her your true purpose for existing: to administer all that God gives for his glory. If you are struggling to give God something, ask Mary to lend you her yes in order to help you to trust God’s will for your life rather than your own human logic or feelings that can easily deceive us.

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School of the Word

Weekly Readings

“All generations will call me blessed”

(Luke 1:48)

Week 5: Mary as Christ’s suitable helper



*“...His mother said to the servants,
'Do whatever he tells you'...”*

(John 2:5)