

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Luke (*Luke 1:38*)

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to Me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left Her. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection - Trust in God Proceeds from a Loving and Humble Heart

A lesson to learn from the reaction of Mother Mary. When Mary was requested by Angel Gabriel to be the mother of the Messiah, Her first concern was not for Her own safety and comfort but how it could be possible as She was not married at that time. An unwed mother in those days carries the risk of public condemnation and severe punishment which Mary was sure to be aware of. This was not Mary’s concern. Although Her personal risk was real and great, Mary was able to rise above this and focused on the larger picture – of how this process could happen. Oftentimes when we are asked to commit to do a task our first response is usually to check whether such a commitment would require us to move outside our comfort zone. In so doing we are led by our feelings and not by faith as St. Paul exhorts us (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:7).

True humility is acknowledging one’s nothingness before God and modifying our behaviour based on this truth. Mary naturally trusted God. She did not offer excuses for Herself, or remind the angel of the difficult and dangerous assignment She was asked to take up, albeit a highly honorable one. After the angel answered Her question of how she being an unmarried woman can bear the Child, she accepted it with trust and provided Her unconditional “Yes” to the angel’s request. Her humility is evident in Her reaction to the angel’s unusual request and the way She addressed Herself. She said, “*I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to Me be fulfilled.*” (cf. *Luke 1:38*). Mary, having deep humility, sees Herself as the lowly servant of the Lord, and behaves as a perfect servant would: caring for the welfare of others and forgetting about Her own interest.

A loving heart is one that delights in doing God’s will. *Jesus said, if you love Me, keep my commands (John 14:15).* Although little in Scripture is written on Mary, we have a deep insight into Her heart through Her responses to the life situations that God has placed in Her path. Mary’s concern is always “May your word to Me be fulfilled.” This she proved by saying “Yes” to Angel Gabriel’s request. Again she proved Her selfless love when she embarked on a long and difficult journey to visit Cousin Elizabeth once she learned from Angel Gabriel that Elizabeth was six months pregnant. Out of Her selfless love for God which filters down to Her concern for the welfare of others, Mary puts Her full trust in God without struggle or difficulty, without a thought for the danger or physical discomfort that would surely come Her way for saying Her “Yes” to God.

Many graces are poured out on those who place their trust in God. *Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun (Psalm 37:4-6).* Once we place our full trust in the Lord, He is able to bring His power to bear upon our situation. The power of the Holy Spirit could overshadow Mary to bring about the incarnation of Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God. Before he sank in fear, St. Peter was operating on a supernatural plane when he walked on water towards Jesus. Prophet Daniel’s three young friends: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were unhurt when they were forced into a flaming hot furnace for refusing to worship the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Our problems are compounded by our lack of trust in God and our inability to surrender to God. Scripture tells us that Jesus could not perform many miracles in those places where people did not have faith (cf. Matthew 13:58, Mark 6:5). We are used to having things under our control. It is difficult to give up our control. To surrender to God our situation is to let go and hand over the situation, letting God take over and control, releasing our worries and tension, and humbly accepting whatever the outcome that presents itself, as the will of God. A true surrender brings deep peace to the troubled heart. A true surrender glories our Lord greatly.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I surrender to You my poor heart. Out of Your merciful love, render it like Yours – meek and humble. Prune away all my disorderly passions that prevent me from placing all my trust in You. In every difficult situation that presents itself, may I have the grace of our Mother Mary in saying my unconditional and confident “Yes” to whatever You may ask of Me. This, I know is more important to You than the physical outcome of any situation which is Yours to determine. Mary, my Mother of Salvation teach me to place all my trust in Jesus, our Saviour and our God. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus. www.twohearts.hk