

Mary, Mother of Mercy



The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the house of Judah.

In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness'.

Thus says the Lord: Only if I had not established my covenant with day and night and the ordinances of heaven and earth, would I reject the offspring of Jacob and of my servant David...For I will restore their fortunes, and will have mercy upon them.

Jer 33:14-16, 25, 26

Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you. Lk 1:28



An annunciation
is that moment
when a person is confronted
with God,
when “the Other” speaks to us,
enters our world.
It marks that moment
when God’s plans
pull us off course
from our own plans.

Penelope Duckworth,
Mary-the Imagination of Her Heart, p9





Mary pondered the greeting. Lk 1:29
dieologizeto Gk asked herself

Mary was treasuring all these words,
continuing to ponder what she heard in her heart. Lk 2:19

Mary treasured all these things in her heart. Lk 2:51

To ponder...symballousa

- held all in her heart knowing that the meaning would one day come together
- placing together for comparison

present participle denoting something underway,
not a completed action, bringing together in one's mind



- to think about something carefully in your head
- to weigh it in your mind
- implies a serious process of mental activity, a careful consideration of all the factors involved.

weighing - comparing each new circumstance with what had already taken place in order to acquire the fullest information concerning the nature and mission of her son.



ALL THINGS...The angel Gabriel's words, her cousin Elizabeth's words, the shepherds' words, the Old Testament words about the Messiah's coming, losing Jesus and finding him in the temple, his rebuff to his parents, placing primacy on duty towards his Father.



So she kept adding to her treasure store. She held all that was happening in a precious bundle. Over and over again, she unpacked it and spread it out on the table of her heart.

Each time, she would arrange the pieces anew, placing the various elements in fresh configurations.

Today she would, perhaps, place the shepherds' words beside a passage from an Old Testament prophet.

Tomorrow she might place the shepherds' words beside the words of Gabriel. On Thursday she might consider the shepherds' words as they related to Elizabeth's greeting.

Jean Fleming, [//www.aholyexperience.com/2014/06/why-your-heart-really-needs-the-practice-of-pondering/](http://www.aholyexperience.com/2014/06/why-your-heart-really-needs-the-practice-of-pondering/)





The value of a birth story like this one:

A story of hope and trust - Nothing is impossible for God

We enter into relationship with God - The Lord is with you

Opting out doesn't seem an option

- The power of the Most high will overshadow you

We are shown how to be present to God's plans...

HOW CAN THIS BE?



Brigid Marlin

Here am I, the servant of the Lord;
let it be with me according to your word. Lk 1:38

Then God said, “Let there be light”;
and there was light. Gen 1:3

Let it be with me according to your word. Lk 1:38

“Father if you are willing, take this cup away from me,
still not my will, but yours be done.” Lk 22:42



Then God said,
“Let there be light”;

and there was
light...and God saw
that the light was
good. Gen 1:3,4

ginomai Gk
let be, be done

Let it be with me according to your word. Lk 1:38



ginomai Gk

Mary's **consent** underscores her conscious and active faith as one who hears the word of God and keeps it. Here am I.

Fiat, radical trust in God, is based on a bedrock conviction that God is faithful.

This is very different to the submissive obedience that has labelled Mary for centuries.

Elizabeth Johnson, Truly Our Sister, A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints, p254

“Father if you are willing, take this cup away from me,
still not my will, but yours **be done**.” Lk 22:42



ginomai Gk

Saying *Fiat* is a yes that requires something more of us.

It requires us to abandon ourselves to the will of God.

This letting be allows a mystery to unfold

- a mystery of creation
- a mystery of birth
- a mystery of resurrection



God's "fiat" was the act of creation

Mary's "fiat" was consent to the Incarnation

Jesus' "fiat" was surrendering in love on the cross





“Let” is a word that pleads with us to throw open some door inside ourselves.

What does God want to do in us and for us?

“Let” is an invitation, an appeal to the heart, an appeal to the will.

Birth of something new!



Patient Waiting

Let it be with me...

A new way of being.....

More than a simple acceptance,
or letting go of our own will,
but an allowing for divine creativity!





Father, into your hands

I commend my spirit.

Lk 23;46

Surrender

- Being available to God

You

are my God; save
your servant who
trusts in you.....

Ps 86:2



To let go, to be non-clinging, self emptying, is only a hair's breadth from 'let be'. Our self emptying, kenosis – the way of Jesus, is not only letting go, but letting be, allowing a speaking into birth.

A path of renunciation which brings life!

adapted from Cynthia Bourgeault, The Wisdom Jesus



in her heart...

Praying, - **Oranta** ,
Panagia , Lady of the
Sign -

The Lord himself
shall give you a sign.
Behold a virgin shall
conceive, and bear a
son, and his name
shall be called
Emmanuel.
Isaiah 7:14





Our Lady of the Sign

The New Mercy Seat





Perhaps this is why pregnancy is such a useful metaphor:
the Spirit needs a space - womb,

bond - an infallible link of love, the closest bond we all experience
as born of woman

Need to be patient - As the rain and the snow come down from
heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and
making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and
bread for so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not
return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve
the purpose for which I sent it. Is 55:10,11

Be creative! made in God's image

God's work is hidden- nature of pregnancy (at least pre ultrasound!)

Magnificat!

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy your name!
Your mercy is from age to age,
on those who revere you. Lk 1:50



You protect Israel, your servant, remembering your mercy:
the mercy promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and his
descendants for ever. Lk 1:54,55

Consideration of God's mercy
sustains hope that God,
who is absolutely faithful to his
promises, is acting in the
events of our lives
and in the events of history.



Those who fear the Lord depend on God's loving kindness. Yearning to experience God's mercy increases as one grows in relationship with God, passing from fear of the Lord to wisdom.

The more we grow in relationship to God the more we recognise our limitations and our needs. The more clearly we comprehend God, the more clearly we see ourselves.

Mercy, God's loving kindness, is like a cord binding us to our God. As we purposely set out to live the gospel, we recognise more and more the heaviness of the load of frailty which we carry. More and more we cry out for God's mercy to hold that load for us.

Mary Catherine Nolan, OP, Mary's Song – Living Her Timeless prayer



Mary's Mercy Points to Jesus

St. John Paul II 1993 encyclical, *Veritatis Splendour* (The Splendour of Truth), in the section titled "Mother of Mercy" wrote:

"Mary is Mother of Mercy because her Son, Jesus Christ, was sent by the Father as the revelation of God's mercy (John 3:16-18). Christ came not to condemn, but to forgive, to show mercy (Matthew 9:13). And the greatest mercy of all is found in his being in our midst and calling us to meet him and to confess, with Peter, that he is 'the Son of the living God' (Matthew 16:16)."

WE fly to thy patronage, O holy **Mother of God**;
despise not our petitions in our necessities,
but deliver us always from all dangers,
O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.



A Latin American Hail Mary

Ave Maria, of the third world, full of grace,
all you who know pain, know the anxieties and the
subhuman condition of your people

the Lord is with you, with all who suffer, who hunger
and thirst for justice, who know neither letters for
figures.

Blessed are you among women, the women and men of the
roads and pueblos, of furrowed faces, of brawny muscles,
of calloused hands, or forlorn eyes, but with hope.

Blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Because without him, our life and the struggle for human dignity has no meaning.

Sancta Maria, all of you holy,
a thousand times holy, by your lives,
by the times that you carry water,
that you smudge your face at the hearth,
trusting and hoping in God.
he has made you Mother of God.



Pray for us sinners, for it is our fault, in one way or another, by our egoism and envy, that you, joined with the rest of the women and the men of the poor, the third world, suffer misery, totalitarian governments, economic repression, wars and blood and hatred.

Now, so that we may change, so that there will be a conversion of heart and of all men and women towards your Son, our brother.





*And at the hour of our death,
so that the Lord have
mercy on all who have
offended him in our
brothers and our sisters, in
the men and women of a
world that is struggling
desperately for life. Amen*

written down from an oral tradition
by Fr Jose Antonio Esquivel S.J.

Pray for us

O holy mother of God.

That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Our Lady's words to St. Brigid of Sweden (Rev. 1.6, c.10):
"I am the Queen of Heaven and the Mother of Mercy;
I am the joy of the just, and the door through which
sinners are brought to God." 14th cent

I began a novena to the Mother of God. This novena consisted in the prayer "Hail, Holy Queen" recited nine times. Toward the end of the novena I saw the Mother of God with the Infant Jesus in her arms. ... I could not stop wondering at His beauty. ... I heard a few of the words that the Mother of God spoke. ... The words were: "I am not only the Queen of Heaven, but also the Mother of Mercy, and your Mother" (*Diary of St. Faustina*, 330).

