

Speaking of Jesus: Advent Reflections on Hope
St. David's By the Sea, Cocoa Beach, FL
Session 3: What Mary Knew
December 20, 2011

Hope

- Gift of grace outpoured
 - Multi-faceted (wisdom, guidance, patience, long-sightedness)
 - Communal and Personal
- Virtue (received again and again until it forms the heart's response)
 - Only can be virtue because it is first a gift of God

Zechariah and Elizabeth—communal hope embrace, personal hope lost

- Elizabeth, filled with the Spirit, first one to announce Jesus' existence and identity
- Zechariah, testimony of hope received and bathed in for an extended period of time

Mary—filled with grace (divine favor) also filled with personal hope that God would make the way for her

Zechariah and Simeon

Hope's Signature	Zechariah	Simeon
<i>Promise</i>	Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people...	Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;
<i>Fulfillment</i>	That we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all of our days...	for my eyes have seen your salvation that you prepared in the presence of all peoples,
<i>Praise</i>	...because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace.	a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.
Prophetic Word	John: And you, child, will be called the prophet of the	Jesus: Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and

	<p>Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, To give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins.</p>	<p>rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed...so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.</p> <p>Mary: “And a sword will pierce through your own soul also.”</p>
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What Mary knew from the beginning...

- That she was favored (ingraced) by the God who was with her (Luke 1:28)
 - Grace as God’s love stooping earthward “humble estate”
- That her own particular path lay at the tip of a sword (Lk 2:35)

What Mary learned during Jesus’ childhood...

- Others will suffer on account of this son
 - *Now when [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.” (Matthew 2: 13-18)*
 - The heart of Herod exposed—under no allusions of the ruthlessness of the power-hungry
- She will know physical and spiritual poverty
 - Egypt is the symbolic land of exile
 - “The human personality is not contained within the confines of the physical body. To be fully alive we must have a setting. The personality is expressed and fulfilled through home, through family roots and traditions, through the native soil and native land, and the native culture.”

- “This is poverty of spirit: to love the things that God has given you to complete your life, but to be ready to give them back if he requires them, and to give them at once: not grudgingly, not with reservations and grumblings, but readily, eagerly, if possible joyfully; and to give them back even though it is in the darkness, even though there seems no sense in it and the future is black and the world seems in consequence empty and cold.” (Gerald Vann, *The Seven Swords*)
 - She will learn that she cannot cling to this son
 - *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. (Luke 2:41-51)*
 - Your father...no, MY Father
 - Jesus chooses to submit...for years

What Mary learned during Jesus' ministry...

- What it means to be shunned by neighbors.
 - *When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away. (Luke 4:28-30)*
- What it means when her son, himself, becomes the sword.
 - *The Lord called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me*

away. **3** And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." (Isaiah 49: 1,2)

- Sword-piercing interaction
 - *And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother." (Mark 3:31-35)*
 - Thoughts of her own heart revealed
- Full detachment from family
 - *Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind." (Mark 3:20,21)*
 - *Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." For not even his brothers believed in him. Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. (John 7:2-5)*
 - *"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20)*
- But a moment of reprieve...
 - *As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!" But he said, "Blessed rather [indeed] are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:27-28)*
 - *"The mother's vision is unequal to that of her son, but her heart, like chosen ground, is deep enough to sustain the highest tree." (Romano Guardini, *The Lord*)*

Mary' sustenance for the journey

- The facet of grace called faith, hope and love

- *Therefore, since we have been justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces **hope**, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's **love** has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (Romans 5:1-5)*
 - Manna for all disciples who finding themselves empty of their own resources, turn to be filled again and again.
 - More like IV drip than inoculation

The Fruit of Mary's Path

- To stand under her son's cross and let the sword go fully in.
- Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. **26** When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" **27** Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. (John 19:25-27)
 - She is there with him—fulfillment of her vocation
 - Picture of Jesus and the three Marys
 - She is cut off from him
 - "The son grants the mother solidarity with the Cross in that he withdraws from her, just as the Father has withdrawn from the Son." (Han urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*)
- No more fear...
 - *In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)*
 - *And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. (Luke 1:30)*
 - *Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:12-14)*