

SAINT THOMAS CHURCH

Fifth Avenue · New York City

Tuesday, May 31, 2022

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Solemn Eucharist

5:30 p.m.

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A Sermon by

Mo. Prisca Lee-Pae, *Associate for Pan-Asian Ministry*

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Do you want to hear my song?

Today, we have gathered here to commemorate the meeting of two women who were filled with the Holy Spirit, who experienced firsthand that there is nothing impossible with God with their whole bodies. Mary heard the news of her pregnancy as a virgin from the angel Gabriel. This devout girl said to the angel, "Be it unto me according to thy word." Even though she accepted it with her strong faith, how could she not be afraid? She must have desperately needed someone she could trust and confide in her what had happened to her. That is why Mary arose in those days and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country to visit Elizabeth.

The conversation between these two women is quite familiar to us, but if we look closely and carefully, we can find that it is more spiritual, prophetic, humble and sublime than any other priests or prophets' conversation in the Bible. Elizabeth proclaimed "blessed are you among women" to a pregnant single mom, a felony guilty of being stoned to death at that time. Elizabeth knew that Mary had believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord even without Mary's explanation. And Elizabeth humbly thanked Mary for coming to her. She said, "Why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?"

When Mary meets Elizabeth who recognizes and embraces her, Mary sings her song. The song shows what kind of vision, dream, faith, and courage this young woman has. She has a clear awareness of not only who she is, what the divine calling and historical mission she must bear, but also who God is, what God has done and will do for her people, Israelites. And we can see that she is fully prepared to live her own vocation as she perceives it to be. This Mary's song cannot be sung without absolute faith in God. And it is the song that can only be sung in front of Elizabeth, her spiritual mate, who believes and recognizes everything about her. We who know God, know God's will, and God's love, are living with our own song in our hearts. Each of us has a song within us made up of each verse with vision, dreams, faith, and courage. It is the song that pops out when we meet someone who sees us through the spiritual eyes without any prejudice or judgment like Elizabeth. The church is a space where Mary and Elizabeth meet, where each other's songs can resonate. Do you want to hear my song? Then you must be my Elizabeth. Do you need Elizabeth? Then you must be like Mary reaching out someone with open heart.

I pray that through these beautiful encounters, we will become a community where songs of justice, love, peace and hope resound beautifully altogether.

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son.

Look with compassion on the whole human family;
take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts;
break down the walls that separate us;

unite us in bonds of love;
and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth;
that, in your good time,
all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*