

The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth

'Soon afterwards Mary got ready and hurried off to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said in a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women, and blessed is the child you will bear! Why should this great thing happen to me, that my Lord's mother comes to visit me? For as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby within me jumped with gladness. How happy you are to believe that the Lord's message to you will come true!" Mary said, "My heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Saviour, for he has remembered me, his lowly servant! From now on all people will call me happy, because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me. His name is holy; from one generation to another he shows mercy to those who honour him. He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans. He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands. He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors, and has come to the help of his servant Israel. He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham and to all his descendants for ever!" Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth and then went back home.' (Luke 1:39-56)



*'The Visitation' Carl Block, adapted by
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A Reflection

'The baby within me jumped with gladness'

This is a moment of utter joy and celebration. Mary, a young woman, made her way to visit her elderly cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth six months pregnant, and Mary newly pregnant. The gospel account of this encounter just bursts with gladness and joy. There is hugging and singing and rejoicing.

Not only are the two women leaping with joy but the baby in Elizabeth's womb has also leapt with gladness. The meeting of two women who have found themselves pregnant in extraordinary circumstances through the workings of God. Elizabeth pregnant with a son to prepare the way for the coming of Christ, and Mary pregnant with Christ. The two women cannot believe what is happening. They know they are part of the salvation story, however much or little they had comprehended it.

I wonder how you feel at this station? I wonder if you also feel you want to celebrate, join the party!? The vibrancy itself speaks of a bursting of jubilation and delight. I wonder if you have had those times in life when someone has been alongside you at a significant time in your life. Maybe someone who has only been there for that moment of your life, but there has been a bond between you that no one else could have had. The moment

between Mary and Elizabeth was one of those moments. A moment that only those two women at that point in time could share at the deepest level, no one else would have understood as they did.

There are times in our lives when we encounter our own jubilee moments of pure joy with a particular person and perhaps today you can give thanks for those moments and the people who shared the moment with you - maybe a person you've known a long time or a complete stranger.

The meeting of Mary and Elizabeth at that moment in their lives was not just a joy between them, but it was a joy that permeates to all, even the unborn babies. We all rejoice with joy and gladness. Alleluia Alleluia 🎉



A Prayer

God of unexpected blessings,
We thank you for the joy that filled Elizabeth's heart,
causing the child within her to leap with gladness,
and for the profound joy that erupted from Mary,
voiced in the song of the Magnificat.
I give thanks for the moments of joy that I have shared with others,
and thank you for making these two women
the first witnesses to your saving plan.

Amen.