

Feast of Queen of the Holy Rosary

October 7

[Zechariah 2: 14-17; Responsorial Ps Luke 1:46-55; Acts 1:12-14; Gospel Luke 1:39-47]

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Dominican parishes and communities celebrate the Queen of the Holy Rosary feast on the First Sunday of October. The following reflection is based on the special readings for the feast.

Zechariah proclaims in the first reading that God is coming from God's holy dwelling to live with us. The Gospel shows us two pregnant women sharing their secrets of God's awesome intervention in their lives that would change the destiny of all the people on earth. The older woman moving into the last trimester of her surprise pregnancy greets the newly pregnant teenage girl as "the mother of my Lord." Mary, this little slip of a girl, cries out that her very being is both a mirror of the goodness of God and the handmaid, or, slave girl, who proclaims by her very existence the greatness of the Lord.

As we view the magnificent account of Jesus' public ministry, we are stunned to see the remarkable delicacy and sensitivity he displays in his encounters with the troubled characters of the Gospel. The shame of the woman taken in adultery, the anger of Zaccheus, the aggression of James and John asking for a town to be destroyed because of unbelief, the arrogance of Simon the Pharisee, the impulsiveness of Peter, the remorse of the sinful woman, the desperation of the good thief—all of these come up against the wisdom and truth and graciousness of the Holy One of God. We know where his majesty comes from. He is God, after all. But where did he learn of the inner anguish, the sorrow, the loneliness, the need for acceptance of all these human beings. How did he know how to comfort or affirm or correct with such delicacy and even charm. It was Mary who taught him to be human. He had watched her interact with Joseph, had seen her sharing with her friends and dealing with pushy Roman guards. Her tender love and care for others he had witnessed for years. She would be one concerned with building a good community life in her village and in the new community we call the Church. She is involved in providing refreshment at a young couple's wedding party. After his resurrection, she gathers with his friends in the Upper Room, awaiting the coming of the Spirit. How precious her presence must have been to them. Serving them, perhaps, and sharing stories of his childhood, she became both Lady Wisdom and Mother of the Church to them.

Mary remains so today. As we celebrate the Rosary Feast, we cherish anew our memories of this humble handmaid of the Lord who was so open to God, who has become our Queen. Always ready to pray for us sinners, Mary gathers us into communities to support, love and challenge each other as we do his work of spreading the kingdom.