

*Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church*

The Assumption of Mary

August 15, 2010

Readings:

Revelation 11:19;12:1-6, 10

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:20-27

Luke 1:39-56

Fr. Bob

Elizabeth has a strong reaction when Mary comes to her, to pay her a visit. Elizabeth, at least in the scriptures, is the first one to hold Mary in a highly exalted position. To say that someone was blessed by God, was a high honor that had much more significance than it does in our world today. To call someone blessed, was to put them into the position of being a saint, a truly holy person. It's interesting to note that immediately, Mary tries to temper the response she got from Elizabeth. Instead of talking about herself, Mary begins to talk about the wonders of God. She acknowledges her place in history. She has no doubt about the significance of what is happening to her. But again, she points instead toward the goodness of God. She reflected first on the way God acts and that is followed by what it means, not just for her, but for all the people of Israel. She talks in the past tense about what God has already done. If people knew their history of salvation up to that point. It's a long litany of what God has already accomplished in the kingdom that was still far from complete. God had already shown in his strength in many of the accounts of the Hebrew scriptures that point to the fact that he is the ultimate power of the world. Those, in the eyes of the world, who were powerful, found their power, compared to God's, to be something that was fleeting. The rich of the world are left with a sense of emptiness as those in true need, come to an understanding of God that leaves them filled.

She also points out that he is a God of mercy and a God who is faithful to his promises throughout all the generations of the Israel people. Strong words of faith from a Jewish woman of the day, when the people were experiencing again, a repression that tended to put them down. But she had faith that something was going to change their lives once again. All of this to say, her holiness lay in her faith.

The main idea running through all of this is something the people of Israel needed to hear. Things were going to be turned around because of the goodness of God. Once again, she is pointing beyond herself to the work of God. And this leads to a point about her exchange with Martha and something that showed a key part of the blessedness of Mary and her holiness. The words she spoke are not just about God, but reveal something about herself.

It would be easy for the faithful people to be impatient as they waited for redemption. It would have been understandable in their situation, to at least wonder about God's plan for themselves. And we can do that in our own world today, not just for ourselves but for our world in general. Instead, when she talked about God, she did it with a remembrance that was important. She was able to look at her lord and the world at the same time, and approach God with a spirit of thankfulness. The gratitude she held for God was more than obvious. And it was probably unshakeable, as the next years in her life unfolded. Her trust, gave her confidence. And in her confidence, she already had gratitude for what God was going to do for her and for her people. It's often said, that Mary is an example for all of us in our lives. If that is true, then we have to look at things as she did. First of all, to remember what God has done for us already, to remember our own history where God has blessed us in some way as he touched our lives. And for everyone those blessings hold true even though we may forget them at times. But, in her example, we need also to thank God for the blessings that will come because God is still going to act in our lives. No matter what we face, her example is important to our lives today. To look at the presence of God, to remember our histories and to have hope in the future. To say that she is an example for us, means living lives that are filled with gratitude, for what has been, and to be filled with gratitude, for what is to come.