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WEEKLY LETTER

14 March 2021

Exodus 1.1-10: Psalm 34.11-20
2 Corinthians 1.3-7: John 19.25b-27

Mothers' Sunday

One of the most moving stories in the Gospels is when Mary replies to the Archangel in the Annunciation, "Behold I am the handmaid, let it be to me according to the Lord", Luke 1.38. Today, Mary is once again part of another deeply tender time, in which she meets Jesus for the last time.

Like us, Mary has been on quite a rollercoaster of a life with her Son, which starts with the Annunciation, and then quickly finds that she struggles to understand her teenage son after he disappeared off to the Temple. Following on from this Mary goes through the confusing times in which her whole family fail to understand their Son and brother, and demand that he leaves their home town Nazareth. And there is the time when Mary once again struggles to understand her son at the wedding in Cana.

Now, Mary stands at the foot of the cross, doubtless full of incomprehension, yes love, but still struggling to understand. For it is only after the resurrection when an essential part of the jigsaw is put into place, and Mary begins to more fully see, and so begins to join up all her experiences.

We know perfectly well (I love the honesty of the scriptures) that Mary's life was not full of faith and belief in her son, and I think we shouldn't be too surprised, for no prophet, no saint, no one is full of faith throughout their life – nobody!

But, (I know I shouldn't start sentences with but!) one of the greatest joys of getting old, is that we do understand a good deal more about God's message, and what it means to follow the Christ. Like Mary, you have come a long way from your original 'calling', through numerous and varied experiences, which we can all use to discover more about God and ourselves.

We like Mary have another shot at reality, of connecting our more honest selves, with what we now understand about Christ's message, which is very exciting. Like Mary, we still have a task in hand, to stick at it, which in the past means being patient in finishing what we know needs to be done (Thy will be done), for some good will come out of your faithfulness, that is, enjoy being the hedgehog in Isaiah Berlin's parable of 'The fox and the hedgehog', in which the silly old fox flits from one thing to another, while the hedgehog knows one important thing, and does it.

Stephen

Mary the Mother of Jesus

The fact that Mary was already with child when she was married to Joseph made her an object of much ridicule by her contemporaries, who did not believe in her accounts of a visitation from Gabriel, nor of the annunciation that she was to become the virgin mother of the Messiah.

The story connected with the birth of Jesus, the flight into Egypt, and the presentation of her Son at the temple are all related in full in the Gospels.

Mary's profound thoughtfulness and maternal love are indicated in the New Testament account, which says that "his mother kept all these things in her heart".

Perhaps no mother in history suffered the long travail for her son, as Mary in her deep concern for Jesus, from the night of His birth in Bethlehem to the final tragic night of Golgotha.

Scripture mentions her only five times following the reappearance of Jesus and the beginnings of His ministry after 18 years of silence.

The first is the marriage at Cana in Galilee, at which she was present with her Son. The second is the occasion when she and His brethren, apparently disturbed by the stories of His early ministry, came to speak to him. The third is when the people of Nazareth claimed to know him as her son. The fourth is at the foot of the Cross when Jesus committed her to the care of John, His beloved disciple, with the words, "Woman, behold thy son"; and to John, "Behold thy mother".

Finally, in the days following the Ascension, Mary met with the faithful disciples in the upper room, where they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

Church News

Sunday Worship will be led by Mrs Verena Walder. The Bible Readings are :
Ephesians 2.1-10: Psalm 131.

Cycle of Prayer for the Swansea Region - we will pray for Hall Street, Llanelli.





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