

Treasuring All Things

in the Heart



Silence of Mary

Alice Claire Mansfield, © May 1993

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
you who treasured all things and
pondered them carefully in your heart,
teach us that deep, interior silence
which enfolded you
throughout your lifetime –



the silence of the Annunciation, of faith,
mission and obedience;
the silence of the Visitation, of humility, service and praise;
the silence of Bethlehem, of birth, incarnation and wonder;
the silence of the flight into Egypt, of perseverance, hope and trust;
the silence of Nazareth, of simplicity, intimacy and communion;
the silence of Mt. Calvary, of courage, death and abandonment;



the silence of Easter, of resurrection,
jubilation and glory; silence of Ascension,
of fulfillment, transformation and new creation;
the silence of Pentecost, of peace, power and love.



Mary, in your wisdom, teach us that silence
which enables us to listen to the small, still voice of our God; which
compels us to worship God alone in spirit and in truth; which empowers
us to acknowledge our nothingness
and exult confidently in our Saviour;
which frees us to lose ourselves
in unceasing adoration
of the God
who is Infinite
Love.





Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us now and always,
that we may enter into
that silence of yours
which unites us to Jesus,
your Son,
in the mystery of His silence
before the God of mercies.
AMEN.

Mary pondered the greeting. Lk 1:29
διελογίζετο ἑαυτῇ

Mary was treasuring all these words,
continuing to ponder what she heard in her heart. Lk 2:19

Mary treasured all these things in her heart. Lk 2:51

To ponder...symballousa

- held all in her heart knowing that the meaning would one day come together
- placing together for comparison
present participle denoting something underway
not a completed action, bringing together in one's mind





Treasuring all things

The angel Gabriel's words

Her cousin Elizabeth's words

The shepherds' words

The Old Testament words about the Messiah's coming

Losing Jesus and finding him in the temple

His rebuff to his parents, the importance of duty towards his Father.



So she kept adding to her treasure store. She held all that was happening in a precious bundle. Over and over again, she unpacked it and spread it out on the table of her heart.

Each time, she would arrange the pieces anew, placing the various elements in fresh configurations.

Today she would, perhaps, place the shepherds' words beside a passage from an Old Testament prophet.

Tomorrow she might place the shepherds' words beside the words of Gabriel. On Thursday she might consider the shepherds' words as they related to Elizabeth's greeting.

VISITATION

(The Life of the Virgin Mary, 1912)

Her life at first continued on its gentle course.
Only when climbing were there times when she
Became aware of her wondrous body's changing,--
Then she stood, catching her breath, upon the high hills

Of Judea. But it was not the land she saw:
It was her own fullness which spread about her;
And as she went she felt that no one ever could
Exceed the greatness which she felt within herself.

She had a longing just to lay her hand
Upon the other's body, which was further on.
And as both women swayed toward each other
They touched their bodies, garments and their hair.

Each woman, quite aware of her holy fullness,
Sought comfort and protection from her kin.
Oh, the Saviour in her womb was still a flower,
While in her cousin's body the Baptist began
To leap for joy in exultation.

Adapted from translations

Poem source | in Rainer Maria Rilke, (, translator),

Pictures of God: Rilke's Religious Poetry (First Page Publications 2005) pages 38



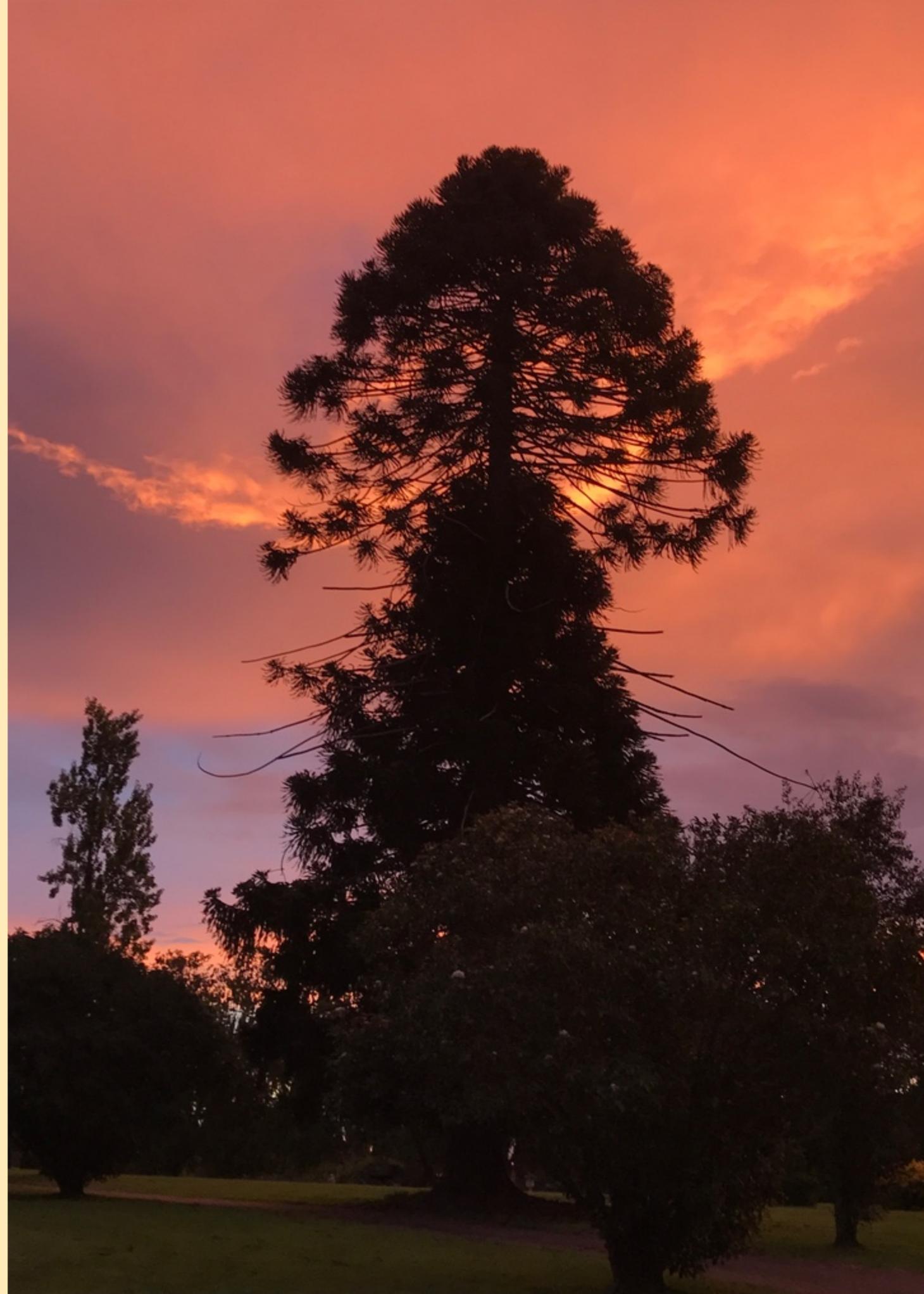
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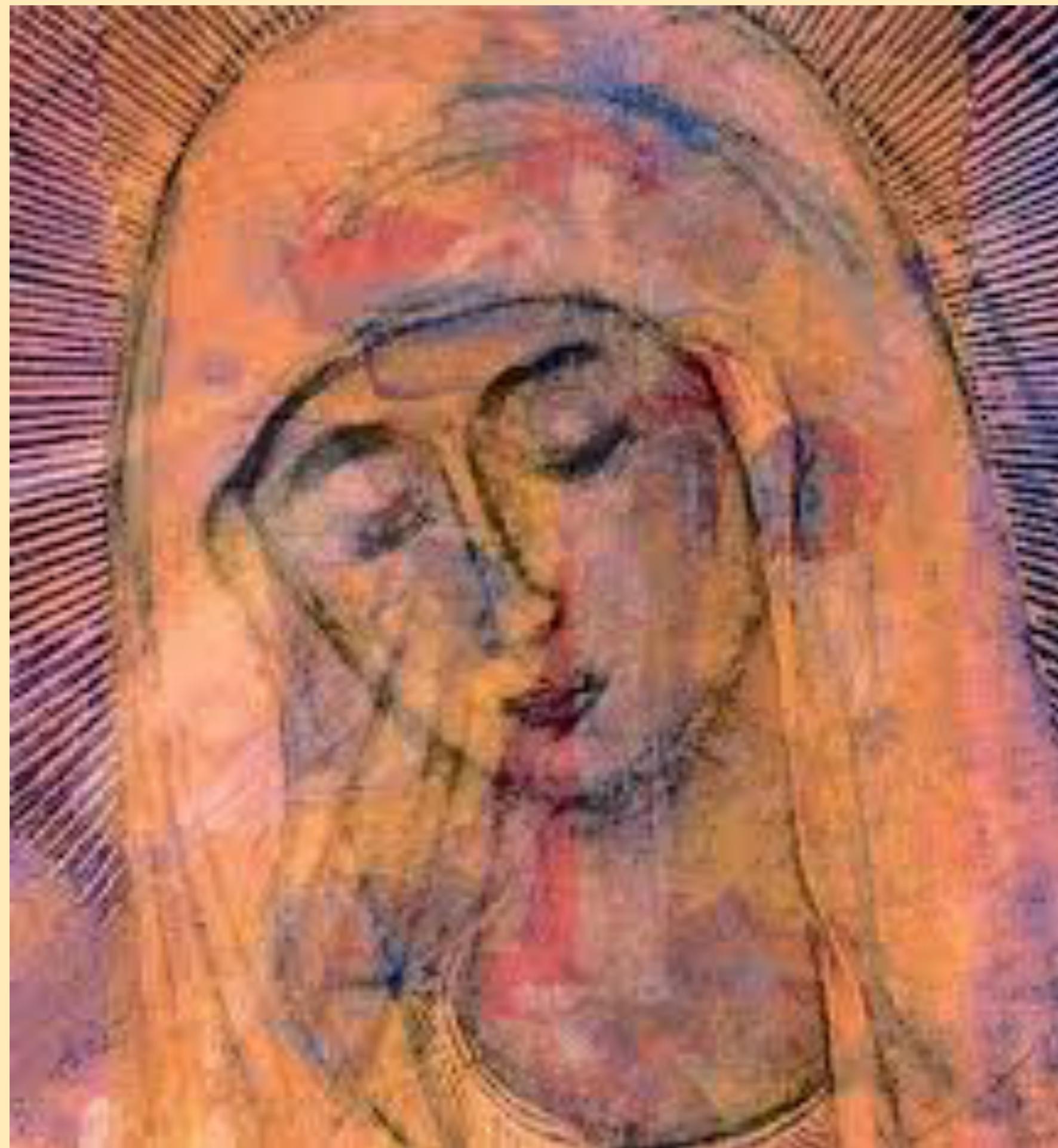
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These two scenes from Luke which
mention all things have in common
a revelation.

Whether explicit or implicit, they
reveal something about the future
of the child. The emphasis is not on
facts, but significance.

Raymond Brown et al,
Mary in the New Testament, p148





...that painful wrenching of heart, of soul, that you feel when you stand helpless in the face of suffering, sickness, death, misguided sincerity, or anything else that is so overwhelming so as to let you know that you are no longer in control. To ponder is to stand begging for God's insight and strength when things overwhelm you.

Ronald Rolheiser OMI The Power of Helplessness

Jesus answered this with another question: “Wasn’t it necessary?” Doesn’t defeat sometimes mean victory? Aren’t silent suffering, interior protest, and helpless empathy sometimes the real weapons for change? Isn’t the sweating of blood the key to sustaining all of our commitments? Isn’t the *carrying of tension* the key to love and family life? Isn’t it only when we admit our helplessness that God finally enters?

“Why is this necessary”? The answer to that questions lies at the heart of all wisdom, all Christian revelation, all depth, all maturity. We will find it precisely when we ponder in the biblical sense, namely, when we stand helpless, muted, and frustrated, but listening, before a pain, an illness, or an injustice that so overwhelms us that we are unable to rely on any power save that of God. What is taught us there holds the key to everything. (Rolheiser)



Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Is 60:1

Hope in GOD. Be strong. Be brave. Put your trust in GOD. Ps 27:14



The Parable of the Weeds
among the Wheat

Mt 13:24-30

Let both of them grow together until
the harvest...

Treasures New and Old

Mt 13: 51-53

Every scribe who has been trained for
the kingdom of heaven is like the
master of a household who brings out
of his treasure what is new and what is
old.





We know that all things work together for good for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purpose. Rom 8:28

What are you being invited to ponder in your life now?



in her heart...





Catacomb of
Priscilla, Rome

Virgin and Child. Catacombs, Rome, 4th century.





Our Lady of the Sign

Praying, - **Oranta** ,
Panagia , Lady of the
Sign - Mary is shown
with arms in orans
position, with Christ
enclosed in a circle
in her womb. "Of
the Sign," is a
reference to the
words of Isaiah 7:14,
"The Lord himself
shall give you a sign.
Behold a virgin shall
conceive, and bear a
son, and his name
shall be called
Emmanuel."





All to Jesus through Mary

*17th century French School of Spirituality and its particular style of Marian devotion

- Cardinal de Bérulle (+ 1629)
 - Jean-Jacques Olier (+ 1657)
 - St Jean Eudes (+ 1680)
 - St Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort (+ 1716)
- Christ centered
 - Emphasis on incarnation, and consequently made not only the birth of Jesus, but even his sojourn in the womb of Mary the axis of its devotion.
 - favourite prayer - "O Jesus living in Mary."



O Jesus,
living in Mary,
Come and live
in Your servants,
In the spirit
of Your holiness,
In the fullness
of Your power,
In the perfection
of Your ways,



In the truth
of Your virtues,
In the communion
of Your mysteries.
Come and subdue
every hostile power
In Your Spirit,
for the glory
of the Father.

Amen

Fr Jean Jacques Olier
1608-1657

- Mary is never to be considered in isolation
- always in a Trinitarian and Christological setting
- Spirituality of the “states of life” as Mother of Christ

- As Mother of God,
she was given a new existence
which changed the whole quality
of her life.

“God exists, lives, moves within her...
to take to himself a new existence,
a new life.”(Berulle)



The God-Man is within her.
He is in her and she is in Him.
He lives within her and she lives within
Him. He depends upon her and she on
Him; she draws life from Him. He is
her life and she is His, and between
these two lives there is but one life,
one love, one joy and rest;
There is wonderful unity.”

“Bind yourself closer and closer to
Jesus and Mary in your soul; have no
other life but their life.”

Cardinal de Bérulle (1575-1629)



“This is her state,
her way, her life...
she enters also into
a new silence
and is there transformed,
in imitation
of the Incarnate Word
who is her Son,
her God and her only Love.
Her life moves from
silence to silence;
from the silence of adoration,
to the silence of transformation.”

Cardinal Berulle



Whenever you pray,
go into your room and shut the door and
pray to your Father who is in secret; and
your Father who sees in secret will reward
you.

Mt 6:6

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly
as you teach and admonish one another
with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms,
hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in
your hearts to God” (Col. 3:16).

“Let the word of Christ—the Message—
have the run of the house.
Give it plenty of room in your lives.”





Shared Treasure

But in God's scheme of things, riches are never for hoarding. Were we to focus only on what symballousa can do for us individually, we would miss an important aspect of what it means to *let the Word inhabit us.*

Jean Fleming

A woman wrapped in
silence,
and the seed
of silence
was her heart
that tried to give All
that it held to give,
and ever more.

from *Woman
Wrapped in Silence*,
John W Lynch, 1941



Perhaps this is why pregnancy is such a useful metaphor: the Spirit needs a space - womb

Need to be patient - As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. Is 55:10,11

Be creative! You are made in God's image!

We are all, men and women, born of woman.

God's work is hidden

- nature of pregnancy (at least pre ultrasound!)

*The one thing that she did
and does
is the one thing that we all
have to do, namely,
to bear Christ
into the world.*

*Caryll Houselander,
The Reed of God, p.*



*What good is it to me that Mary gave birth to the Son of God fourteen
hundred years ago, and I do not also give birth to the Son of God in my time
and in my culture? We are all meant to be mothers of God. God is always
needing to be born. Meister Eckhart*

Last Night as I was Sleeping

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt – blessed vision!-

that a fountain flowed
here in my heart.

I said: Why, O Water, have you come
along this secret waterway,
spring of new life,
which I have ever tasted?

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt – blessed vision!-

That I had a beehive
here in my heart;

and the golden bees
were making

from all my old sorrows
white wax and sweet honey.

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt –blessed vision!-
a blazing sun shone
here in my heart.
It was blazing because it gave heat
from a red home,
and it was sun because it gave light
and because it made me weep.

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt – blessed vision!-
that it was God I had
here in my heart.

Antonio Machado

