

October Reflection

Our Lady of the Rosary, Thursday 7 October

Many ask what the Rosary has to do with Mary, yes, she gave St. Dominic a Rosary in the 17th Century and asked that he led people to pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father instead of the Psalms. It symbolises our lives with God, shared in Mary's story, but the Rosary is not about Mary. Mary gathers us and leads us to her Son, the story of his life death and resurrection.

Mary through her own life, witnesses to us the grace received by her son, who gave His life for me, giving me the love and protection from Satan, giving me the pattern of a life worth living and a witness to others of the willingness to lay down my own life by my "Yes" The Rosary takes me on a journey of Reflection, from finding God in my life, allowing God to look at me, to stand naked before Him in truth, love and with no fear and to see myself reflected as He sees me - Beloved!

There was a time when I wanted no help from anyone, I was safe on my own, never expected God to see me or rate me and I didn't want it, better to be hidden. Deep down inside of all of us is a child hungry for warmth and love. Some are lucky to find it, some are not. Thomas Merton said that "*We make ourselves real by telling the Truth*", it lies at the centre of our being, longing to break free and once we allow God to speak Truth to us, who we are to Him, we then can begin to give birth to our true selves.

[Isaiah 6: 6] "*What a wretched state I am in.*" This is how Mary saw herself when the Angel came, as Nothing! Yet she too like Isaiah in the Joyful Mysteries replies, yes send me. "*Be it done according to your will.*"

St. Augustine asked, "*That I may know you that I may know myself.*" Knowing who I truly am is life giving, a gift from God himself. One is essential to the other. Who am I? This was Mary's question and one which underpins all Christian Life. Do I know me? How self-aware am I? Who is God for me?

Mary in the reflection of the Rosary, leads me to see that the Word is not just to be preached, but to be practised. When we listen to a Sermon or a Homily, we often are led to reflect whether we see those words being put into practice? When I preach with my life, I need to ask the same question. Am I doing it and if not, why not?

Mary was the first disciple; we too are called to this. Mary, through the stories and reflections of the Rosary, needed a faith to believe, to believe that she had a purpose, that she was carried, even when a sword would pierce her heart "*Do not be Afraid!!*"

When God came into my life I was scared, not sure what was going to be asked. I too pondered, but eventually I gave my first yes. Where else was there to go? Like Mary we want to believe, hope, expect, it's hard to let go and let God fulfil His promise amid my doubt. Mary's journey through the Rosary gathers us together, brings us with her- from the promise to the reality. "*He puts forth his arm in strength, etc.*"

The Old Testament and New Testament merge into the birth of Jesus. Mary takes us from expectancy and faith to Truth. God chose to reveal himself by coming to Mary, so that through her Yes, he can be revealed to us and He comes to us, so that we too can reveal Him to others also. Mary leads us to Truth. *"He has done might things for me."*

St. Irenaeus tells us that God's glory is man/woman fully alive, we are God's glory, by how we live out our lives as Mary did, how we witness. Mary comes to me in the Rosary, lays down her life. *"Let it be done unto me."* In this she gives birth to Truth. Mary models for me what God can and will do, if I give Him my freedom, freedom of choice. If I empty myself to become the womb, which gives birth to Jesus in this world, the world where I am, where I live and work.

What is God calling me to be? To give birth to the Messiah in my life. Waiting, hoping, open? Could he come to me? Could I give Him my yes? *"Do not be afraid!"*

Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us all. Amen.

Ask yourself:

- *Where was I before?*
- *Where am I now?*
- *Where would I like to be?*
- *How will I get there?*
- *Who can assist me?*

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