



Church

DECEMBER 2006

CHAT

MARY

VESSEL OF THE INCARNATION – A MEDITATION

by Monica Dowling

*Blessed Mother, I thank you that you allowed yourself to be the vessel of the Incarnation.
I thank you for your fiat, 'May it be done unto me according to Your Word.'
May we be disposed to the Grace that flows from your heart because of your fiat,
that we too may become Vessels of this same Incarnate Word.*

'And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.'

When we pray these words of the Angelus we genuflect to correspond with the posture of reverence and adoration that is solicited within our hearts as we embrace that moment when the Son of God became man in the womb of Our Blessed Mother. We are overcome with awe and are aware of our great unworthiness before this miracle of Love. Although the child is only moments old, His whole person is present and His presence permeates our hearts.

We are consumed with a deep sense of thanksgiving as we are bathed in the bright light of purity that radiates from the heart of the Mother. We too desire that the words of her fiat establish themselves in our hearts and direct in us an attitude of humility and obedience so that we may also respond to the call of God with the words.

**'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord,
May it be done to me according to Your Word.'** (Lk. 1:38)

Jesus, You sanctified the womb of Our Blessed Mother.

*You made her the first tabernacle of Your Love –
The first monstrance of the Holy Eucharist.*

*You brought new dignity to the gift of motherhood;
To the sacred place of the womb;
To the power of the maternal heart.*

In the Heart of Your Mother You created an 'Ark of the Covenant' where all her children may take refuge.

Mary's heart was so consumed with love for God that it always embraced a love for neighbour. In the Annunciation, scripture tells us that after the angel departed, Mary 'set out in haste' to a town of Judah to visit her elderly cousin Elizabeth. The angel had told Mary that Elizabeth, who had been barren, was now in her sixth month of pregnancy, 'for nothing is impossible with God.' (Lk: 37)

Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.' (Lk. 1:42) Then, overcome by the tremendous gift that was before her she 'cried out,'



“But who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

Is this not the same disposition of heart that is called forth from us when, in the prayer of the rosary, we find ourselves before the presence of Our Blessed Mother? Is it not her purity and holiness that humbles our heart and opens us to her love? Is it not that we too are overcome with disbelief that someone who is so holy chooses to love someone so poor and weak – so unworthy.

Yes indeed, when we open our hearts to the gentle heart of our Mother we truly respond from a humbled heart filled with wonder and thanksgiving and we certainly are given to the very question of Elizabeth ‘But who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?’

Mary, it is your very presence that provides for the soul the grace of humility so that we may respond to your love and prayers.

Prepare our hearts to receive and contemplate your Son.

Prepare our souls for the moment that is approaching when we will adore Him in the manger; when we will adore Him with the shepherds and angels; when we will adore Him with you Mary.

Prepare our hearts to say,

“Come, Lord Jesus.”

As the eyes of our hearts open to a scene in Bethlehem, we find there in a cave, Mary and Joseph, keeping vigil over the child Jesus, who is lying in a manger ‘because there was no room for them in the Inn.’ (Lk. 2:7)

Surprisingly, there is no frustration or anxiety in the hearts of Mary and Joseph. There is no bitterness that no door would open to them. There is only a deep and penetrating stillness; an immense peace; an incomprehensibly joy. There is only contemplation and prayer; adoration and praise; tenderness and mercy; The stillness is not disturbed by the presence of the shepherd and angels who have come to adore. This little child, this infant, draws each heart to His to be enraptured by His Presence in a spirit of profound prayer.

*Mary, you provided a manager of love in your Immaculate Heart
Where we are invited to contemplate and adore Your Son;
Where our hearts are disposed to conversion.*

Through your powerful prayers may we be awakened to the Poverty within us so as to welcome the Child Jesus who always Comes to the little, the simple and the poor.

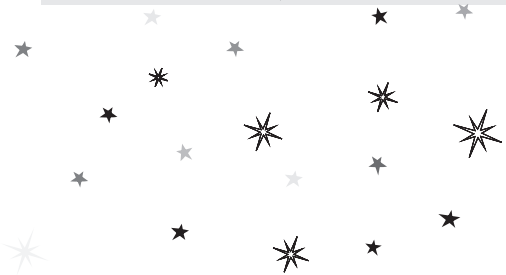
*Create within the cave of our hearts, a manager of silence, prayer,
Humility, purity and love. Amen.*



CHAT

Question Box

1. Has God sent an angel into your life with a message for you?
What is an “angel?”
2. Did Mary have a “special gift” to be able to know God? Do you have special gifts? Do you use them to help others?
3. If you were there in Bethlehem that first Christmas night what would you have said to Mary?
4. Will “this little child, this infant, draw your heart to His” this Christmas, 2006? Can you “be still” enough to hear Him?



Monica Dowling

Monica Dowling is an active member of St. Anthony's Parish – supporting the Adoration Chapel and leading Monday Night Prayer for men and women involved in drugs and alcoholism and street life.

Monica has given a great deal of energy and time to the L'Arche Community in Calgary.

She is one of our Parish's powerful “prayer-angels”!

Monica is a Mother and Grandmother.