

Homily

Luke 1: 39-56

- Today, as a Church we celebrate the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this feast day we celebrate the special gift God bestowed on Mary at the end of her earthly life – taking her immediately to heaven body and soul.
- Today we are called to reflect on Mary: her life, her lessons and her presence with us today as Mother of the Church.
- And as we reflect on Mary today, I thought we might consider this question: What if Mary said NO?
- What if Mary said no to the angel that told her God’s plan for her was to bear a son who would be the savior of the world? What if she said, “No, I’m too afraid, this is too hard. I can’t, I won’t do it”.
- *[Then Mary would have lived a life without courage. A life without the courage to become what she was destined to be.]*
- What if Mary decided not to tell Joseph and her parents about the pregnancy? What if she lied or ran away or hid the child?
- *[Then she would have lived a life without the love and help and understanding of others – especially those closest to her.]*
- What if Mary refused to believe Joseph when he told her they must pick up their lives and move away in order to protect the child Jesus’ life?
- Or what if she tried to stand in the way of Jesus’ ministry – keep Him home – talk Him out of this crazy, dangerous thing?
- *[Then she would have lived a selfish life – a life without sacrifice.]*
- What if Mary didn’t tell Jesus “they are out of wine” at the wedding feast at Cana? Didn’t think Jesus could help this newly married couple? Thought this was someone else’s problem and just didn’t care enough to get involved.
- *[The she would have lived a life not believing in miracles and the miraculous power of Jesus.]*
- What if Mary said no to prayer? What if she didn’t pray over things? Didn’t ponder events in her heart (the good and not so good things)? What if she didn’t look for God’s presence in those day-to-day events and those special events in her life?
- *[Then she would have lived a life without direction, without meaning or purpose.]*

- And what if Mary turned away when Jesus was arrested? Refused to let herself enter into the sufferings of another, feel the pain of another, refused to offer comfort and show she cared.
- ***[Then she would have lived her life without ever knowing what true love is all about.]***
- How different Mary's life would have been had she said, "No".
- But Mary said, "Yes".
- Each event we just considered, all of the things asked of Mary required one important thing: Trust in God.
- Mary's whole life was one big "yes" to the will of God. One big, trust-filled "yes".
- And we see that "yes", that trust, was rewarded. Part of God's plan for Mary was for her to witness the joy of the resurrection of Jesus. Another part of God's plan was to give Mary a special place in heaven and a special role as our spiritual Mother.
- So we look to Mary, as a model for our lives because she lived through what we are living through: life, with all its joys, sorrows, challenges, temptations and confusion.
- We look to our spiritual Mother for guidance and she teaches us some important things.
- Above all Mary points to her son Jesus and says follow His teachings and examples.
- Have the courage to be who you were created to be. When you feel God calling you to something – a new job, a move, a new relationship, a religious vocation – don't let fear stop you from believing and trusting God has a plan for you.
- Mary tells us when we have a tough choice to make, when we are going through a difficult, confusing time; when we think no one will understand – Don't carry these things alone! Trust in others, especially those closest to you. Trust in their understanding, their help, and their love. God put them in your life for a reason.
- Mary teaches us it is important to make sacrifices. Life is not all about us! Sometimes we need to do things we didn't plan to do or didn't want to do – because it is for the good of someone else.
- Mary shows us we can believe in miracles. Big miracles like her appearances at Fatima so many other places where God provided physical and spiritual healings. But also smaller miracles: the grace to look at something differently; to accept something difficult; to share time with those we love – all miracles!

- Mary reminds us that true love, the love of Jesus, requires that we bring that love to others: especially those in need – the poor, the sick, the lonely and depressed. Not being afraid to share someone’s pain and let him or her know you are there for them, you care. And to remind them God loves and cares for them.
- Finally, Mary urges us to take time out of our busy lives to pray and reflect on things. To think about the events going on in our lives and try to see the purpose. To look for God’s presence in these events. To ask: “How has God spoken to me today?” “ What is God calling me to do next?”
- This is what Mary did. Mary knew God was with her and she cherished that relationship. She loved God; she trusted God and she listened for God.
- It is how she found meaning and purpose and direction in her life. And as our spiritual Mother, she urges each of us to do the same.
- God bless you.