

## PASTOR'S CORNER



One of my favorite mysteries of the Rosary is the Visitation, a story extremely important for our understanding of the relationship between Christ and John the Baptist and a frequent choice for celebrations of Our Blessed Mother. But what happens if we try to understand the story through the eyes of St. Elizabeth?

Elizabeth is, of course, the wife of Zechariah, a high priest – she is a woman of great dignity and prestige. But her whole life she has suffered the greatest disgrace a woman of her time can suffer – she has been barren, unable to assume that most dignified and sacred of all vocations – Motherhood. Many of us have seen the pain and distress brought upon a couple that cannot conceive a child – it can be devastating to a marriage and is only endured with great difficulty.

But now, she finds herself beyond the years of childbearing and pregnant! That once sterile womb is now filled with life, her shame is gone her disgrace has been removed. How blessed she must feel! How she must now think her joy complete!

As an act of thanksgiving she goes into seclusion for five months to spend her time in prayer. But she does not tell the family the news that is still almost too good to be true. And so it is a surprise when she hears the voice of her cousin Mary coming to visit. It is an even greater surprise as the child in her womb begins to leap for joy and suddenly Elizabeth is filled with a great awareness of the presence of God like she has never felt before: And she begins to prophesy to something she cannot see.

For all the joy that Elizabeth has felt in her pregnancy, she recognizes a far greater cause for joy present in Mary. Though Elizabeth has been blessed by God beyond all her hope she calls Mary blessed among women. Mary has only just conceived and yet Elizabeth knows her to be with child. And not just any child, but the Lord. Elizabeth is the first to see that unseen truth that Mary is the Mother of God.

On this Rosary Sunday, we ask you every year to imitate St. Elizabeth – to prophesy to things you cannot see.

The Dominican Order has been serving Blessed Sacrament and the University District for more than 100 years. You have known the love and the dedication of so many priests, some of whom like Mary have traveled far to visit you and attend to your needs. They bring to you that Word of Joy in their preaching. They carry with Mary He who is Wisdom itself: the uncreated Wisdom that is Jesus Christ. Many of them have also been quite young. Not long ago, most of us serving you now were not yet priests – and completely unknown and unseen by you.

And yet each and every year, with the generosity you are known for, you have prophesied to the unseen reality that we were chosen – that I was chosen by God to someday serve you.

It costs a about \$52,500 dollars year to support a brother in formation. With 34 brothers currently in formation, each going through eight years of training, with the sure hope of adding many more to that number, and without direct support from the diocese we serve, we find ourselves completely dependent on your contributions.

In your pews are brochures with more information about how you can give. Please take one home and pray about it – you can mail in the included envelope, drop it in the basket, or make a donation online. Most importantly, please keep our brothers in prayer as Elizabeth certainly kept Mary in prayer until the time she was to give birth to our Lord and Savior.

You have one advantage over St. Elizabeth – What you hope for and witness to is not entirely unseen. As you look through the brochure you will recognize many faces of brothers who have already served here – You get to meet the novices as they come through each year; Br. Scott served her last year and Br. Andrew Thomas was here over the summer. Br. Paschal will be here this year as well. And so it is much easier for me to ask you to once again prophesy – to ask you once again to hope on men you do not yet know – to witness to a future you have not yet seen – to declare these men chosen by God for service to you.

In Christ, through Mary,

*Fr. Dominic David Maichrowicz, OP*