Spirituality
Pencil Preaching

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“From this day all generations will call me blessed” (Luke 1:48).

**The Feast of the Visitation**

*Zep 3:14-18a*; *Lk 1:39-56*

Mary, it can be said, was the first to experience Pentecost. What happened to the disciples in the upper room first happened to Mary some 30 years earlier in Nazareth, where she was overshadowed by the same Holy Spirit and conceived Jesus in her womb. The Word became flesh.

We celebrate on this feast of the Visitation the recognition of that conception. Mary hastened to the hill country of Judah to share her joy with Elizabet, two pregnant women carrying the future of salvation history who embrace and proclaim that God keeps promises.

This past Sunday we celebrated Pentecost, the birthday of the church. The followers of Jesus, gathered in prayer with Mary and were animated by the same Holy Spirit to become the body of the Risen Christ, the firstborn of the new Creation, Redeemer of the world, present in history through us.

Mary's song of thanksgiving is also the song of the church. It is a song of praise that God chose to accomplish something so great through a seemingly insignificant and anonymous young woman from a small village in a forgotten corner of the world. The first shall be last, and the last first.

The *Magnificat* is also a bold song declaring justice for the poor and oppressed of history. God's might will be revealed in the lifting up of the lowly and the casting down of the so-called powerful and satisfied of this world. No suffering will be forgotten; every prayer will be heard and every promise kept.

How can we live Pentecost? Today's feast reminds us that Mary brought her faith and her experience as a mother to that upper room where a small huddle of anxious disciples awaited the rebirth they were promised by her son Jesus. Mary is the model and midwife for all of us as we make Pentecost real in our lives.