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Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Date: Saturday, May 31, 2025 | **Season:** Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14–18a
Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 12:2–3 | **Response:** Isaiah 12:6
Gospel Acclamation: Luke 1:45
Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39–56
Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House **in the** Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia**.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

It begins with a journey. A young woman rises in haste and climbs into the hill country. Dust gathers on her sandals. The sun warms her back. Her heart beats with a secret too vast for words. In her womb, the Word is already speaking. Mary, the handmaid of the Lord, is on her way to Elizabeth—not simply to share news, but to share joy; not merely to serve, but to bear the Saviour Himself.

On this Feast of the Visitation, we are given more than a scene from Scripture—we are offered a sacred glimpse into the nature of the Gospel: that love moves, that grace goes forth, that joy cannot be contained. Two women meet, and the eternal draws near in quiet awe.

Zephaniah's voice echoes across the centuries: "Shout for joy, daughter Zion!" But the prophet speaks not just to Jerusalem, trembling under Assyrian threat, but to all who have waited in the dark. His words stretch into Mary's time—and ours. In a world riddled with uncertainty and wearied by war, by corruption, by the cruel mathematics of inequality, God's promise stands: The Lord is in your midst. Not distant. Not delayed. Here. Now. With us.

And so Mary goes with haste. Not from anxiety, but from abundance. When grace enters a soul, it cannot sit still. When Christ draws near, something stirs—even in wombs once thought barren, even in hearts long closed by grief or fear. The child within Elizabeth leaps, as if creation itself is waking up. This is no soft emotion—it is the first ripple of a great reversal. God is beginning to upend the order of things. And Mary, caught up in that holy current, begins to sing.

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Her song, the Magnificat, is no lullaby. It is a canticle of upheaval. It unseats the comfortable. It lifts the lowly. It is sung in every slum and settlement where mothers pray for bread, in every classroom where girls dream of justice, in every village where water still walks kilometres in buckets on the heads of the poor. It is a hymn of the hungry.

"He has scattered the proud… lifted up the lowly… filled the hungry with good things." These are not future promises—they are declarations of the Kingdom already in motion.

This Gospel, friends, is not about private consolation. It is a public, prophetic visitation. Mary brings Christ not only to Elizabeth, but to a broken world. And here in Zambia, in 2025, we are asked: are we willing to do the same? Just as Mary carried Christ in her womb, we too carry Christ within us, especially after receiving Him in the Eucharist. We are called to bring His love and grace to others.

The path of Mary runs through our parishes, our universities, our farms, our clinics. Will we rise and go with haste—not away from the world's wounds, but toward them? Toward the grandmother raising children orphaned by economic collapse. Toward the youth wondering if hope still lives beneath the concrete weight of corruption. Toward the markets and mines and margins where dignity is daily tested.

Now, I know that living out this call to service and justice can be challenging. We may face obstacles, discouragement, or even opposition. But like Mary, we must trust in God's grace and persevere in our commitment to building a more just and loving world.

Mary shows us that true faith always moves outward. It crosses mountains. It knocks on doors. It embraces the forgotten. And it sings.

Saints do not float above history; they stand firmly in it. And so does Mary. She is not a porcelain figure but a prophet with dusty feet. And she visits us still.

In the spirit of Ignatian contemplation, I invite you now to imagine yourself in that hill country. You are in Elizabeth's home. Mary has arrived. What do you feel? What do you see in her eyes? What stirs in your own heart? Will you let her song become your own?

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Let us not be afraid to sing justice into being.
Let us not hesitate to carry Christ to the forgotten places.
Let us not hold back joy from a world starving for hope.

And so I leave you with these questions to pray with this week:

- Where am I being called to go “in haste,” not from fear, but from love?
- What person or place in my life most needs a visitation of God’s mercy?
- How can I become a bearer of Christ—not just in word, but in deed, especially to the poor?

May we, like Mary, rise.
May we, like Mary, go.
And may our lives sing of the God who remembers the lowly, fills the hungry, and never forgets His people.

Amen.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today’s readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.