

Seasons

The newsletter for the Gather Groups for Spiritual Lives of Women

Helping women to SLOW down and Celebrate their Spiritual Natures, Find God and Hear His Calling in their Lives

"For you mothering is more than raising children for you mothering is a calling"



This Sunday

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Book:

Kathryn Sansone
Woman First, Family Always



Gatherings

- * Article
- * Speaker/Event
- * Deeper discussion
- * Book Talk
- * Grab Bag ?

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October Speaker/Event

Finding God in hell
Immaculée Ilibagiza

October 5, Friday, 10:00am - St. Thomas Aquinas, East Lansing

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November Speaker/Event:

Nov. 11
MaryBeth Hicks

Mary Our Mothering Role Model

*Gentle woman, quiet light
morning star, so strong and bright,
gentle Mother, peaceful dove,
teach us wisdom; teach us love.*

Gentle woman, quiet light

Gentle woman, quite light does not mean that Mary wasn't also a resourceful, strong woman.

Quiet gentleness should not be confused with weakness; no Mary was a strong woman, mother, and servant leader. Look at the examples of her mothering that we find in Scripture. Each example shows Mary as loving but firm with Jesus. She guides with a balanced hand, never pushing her agenda but always guiding Jesus toward what Mary has discerned to be God's plan for her son. (John 2 1 – 4) "On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

A plan that was not fully revealed to her, but she could see that something was, or could be in store for her son, just as our children's callings from God are not fully revealed to us.

Morning star

In times past, the morning star, Venus, was called the dawn drawer; an interesting illusion that we can make to Mary as the bearer of Christ. Mary, by accepting with great faith God's plan for the world, brought forth the new Man, the Christ for the salvation of the world, but she was also in awe of what was happening. We, like Mary, must walk by faith and not by sight when rearing our children. (Luke 2 41 – 51) "Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

And like Mary, there are roles the Church has given us to help us be the best parent, person, and believer we can be, the roles of servant leader: Priest, Prophet, and Queen.

Peaceful dove, teach us wisdom; teach us love.

Let's look at those roles of Priest, Prophet and Queen. We look first at Priest. The Church sees the role of the priest as having three components: Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral. As Priest he is called to proclaim the Gospel, to evangelize the Good News to all, in everything he does in his entire ministry as Priest and how he lives his life. He administers the Sacraments to his flock. He will lead the celebration of the Eucharist; provide opportunities for reconciliation, and lead forms of ritual and prayer. He is called to make available for the spiritual and emotional needs of his flock through pastoral care by visiting the sick, and counseling those who come to him with spiritual issues and concerns.

This brings us to other areas of leadership. He is asked to recognize and encourage the talents and gifts of his congregation so that they might participate in the work of the parish and witness to those around them. He is asked to act as administrator of his parish's business affairs, and to oversee the formation and education of those in his charge. He is also encouraged to care for his own spiritual and emotional needs through time for prayer and retreat.

CC783 Jesus Christ is the one whom the Father anointed with the Holy Spirit and established as priest, prophet, and king. The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them.

Now, if we look closely at Priest we see many aspects of our own baptismal calling to join in the priesthood of the faithful and our own calling as mother. As Priest of the home we are asked to evangelize to our children: bring faith into the home, to give them opportunities to administer the sacraments by taking them to mass, helping them to reconcile when they have done or been wronged, to nurture them emotionally, spiritually, and physically. We bless our children with words of encouragement. We administer pastoral care when we listen to their telling of events of the day, comfort them when they are sad or troubled.

Upon closer examination we will see prophet and queen expressed through the priest's roles as he encourages, teaches his flock and administers to the working of the parish business aspects. The church calls us as parents to be the first teachers of the ways of the faith to our children. Aren't we always seeking to understand and encourage our children's budding talents, and seeking ways for them to exercise those talents? Aren't we always teaching our children, exposing them to new ideas and experiences?

Our baptismal call as Queen asks us to be good stewards of all the resources we are given. We balance our check book, look after our homes, care for our cars, make sure we are giving our all at work, and finally care for our greatest resources our own selves.

None of us is called to be closed into our homes with no interaction with the outside world. John 21 15 – 17 "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."

He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (Jesus) said to him, "Feed my sheep."

Jesus asks Peter three times to tend his sheep. In this scripture, the risen Lord has come to Peter and the others when they are fishing and Jesus' asking Peter three times if he will tend to his flock is a mirror of Peter's denying Jesus three times before the cock crows. But there is redemption in this as well. Peter, though he denied Jesus, is still chosen by Jesus to tend his flock. We too fail more times than we would like but we know that we are also called by God to tend, and feed his sheep. Mary, herself, has been called to the same great commission. She recognizes Jesus' potential in the temple. Then at Cana it is she who suggests to Jesus that he start his mission. As parent she heart is breaking as she watches her Son die. She was with the Disciples when they received the Holy Spirit and are commissioned to preach and teach.. She, as handmaid of the Lord, begins her journey toward discipleship by accepting her role as mother, and finally ending it with her assumption into heaven.

CC149 Throughout her life and until her last ordeal when Jesus her son died on the cross, Mary's faith never wavered. She never ceased to believe in the fulfillment of God's word. And so the Church venerates in Mary the purest realization of faith.

Mary surely was the first woman to express the calling of Priest, Prophet, and Queen by her life of faith and the rearing of her Son.

Questions to Ponder

1. Read Luke 1 19 – 50. How did Mary's great faith help prepare for her role as Mother? What emotions was she feeling? How did she deal with those emotions? Was her experience similar to other new mothers? Can you identify with her as mother? In what ways can you? What ways are difficult?
2. Read Luke Chapter 2 41 – 51. What was Mary's reaction to seeing Jesus when he was not where he was thought to be? Does she act like any other concerned mother? What do you believe was going through her mind when Jesus questioned why they were looking for him? What do you believe Mary was treasuring in her heart?
3. Read Acts 1 12 – 14. Mary was gathered with the discipline when Matthais was chosen, what do you believe her role might have been there?
4. What are your thoughts on the poem: Speak to Us of Children? Do you agree or disagree with the images? Do you feel Mary would agree or disagree with the images? Do you believe she felt that way about Jesus?



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