

Elizabeth Miraculously Becomes a Mother

Gospel Reading for December 19, 2016

With Divine Will Truths

Saint Luke 1:5-25

In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years. Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God, according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of (the) Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord." Then Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel said to him in reply, "I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news. But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was gesturing to them but remained mute. Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home. After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying, 'So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others.'

II. The Mysteries of Jesus' Infancy and Hidden Life (CCC)

The preparations

523 St. John the Baptist is the Lord's immediate precursor or forerunner, sent to prepare his way.¹⁹⁶ "Prophet of the Most High," John surpasses all the prophets, of whom he is the last.¹⁹⁷ He inaugurates the Gospel, already from his mother's womb welcomes the coming of Christ, and rejoices in being "the friend of the bridegroom," whom he points out as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."¹⁹⁸ Going before Jesus "in the spirit and power

*of Elijah," John bears witness to Christ in his preaching, by his Baptism of conversion, and through his martyrdom.*199

Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will

Meditation 1

"...So I departed from Nazareth, accompanied by Saint Joseph, facing a long journey, and crossing mountains to go visit Elisabeth in Judea, who, in her advanced age, had miraculously become a mother.

"...After many days of travel, finally I arrived in Judea, and I hastened to the house of Elisabeth. She came toward Me in feast. At the greeting I gave her, marvelous phenomena occurred. My little Jesus exulted in my womb, and fixing little John in the womb of his mother with the rays of His Divinity, He sanctified him, gave him the use of reason, and made known to him that He was the Son of God. And John leaped so vigorously with love and with joy that Elisabeth was shaken. Touched by the light of the Divinity of my Son, she too recognized that I had become the Mother of God; and in the emphasis of her love, trembling with gratitude, she exclaimed: "Whence comes to me so much honor, that the Mother of my Lord would come to me?"

FIAT!