



**LEADER:**

**+In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We rejoice in the call and response of Mary, woman of faith. We celebrate the power of the Divine Presence in the many forms in which God comes to us as well. As we join in gratitude for the faith of Mary, Servant of the Holy One, we pray to renew our commitment to this Unending Love.

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**SONG – Holy is His Name, John Michael Talbot**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord  
And my spirit exalts in God my Savior  
For He has looked with mercy on my lowliness  
And my name will be forever exalted  
For the mighty God has done great things for me  
And His mercy will reach from age to age  
[Chorus]  
And holy, holy, holy is His name

He has mercy in every generation  
He has revealed His power and His glory  
He has cast down the mighty in their arrogance  
And has lifted up the meek and the lowly  
He has come to help His servant Israel  
He remembered His promise to our fathers  
[Chorus]  
And holy, holy, holy is His name  
Holy, holy, holy is His name

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**Leader:** Mother of God, you risked saying yes to being pregnant with the seed of the Holy One.

**All:** May I also overcome my fears and take the risks that spiritual growth requires of me.

**Leader:** Mother of God, you offered the hospitality of your womb as a dwelling place for the Holy One.

**All:** May I continually open the womb of my heart to all who need a welcome there.

**Leader:** Mother of God, you awaited the long nine months of the child's gestation.

**All:** May I wait patiently when spiritual growth seems to come far too slowly.

**Leader:** Mother of God, you did not know how the birth of your child would affect your life.

**All:** May I trust in God's presence to protect and guide me when I face uncertainty.

**Leader:** Mother of God, you cared for and nurtured the divine life within you.

**All:** May I daily do the same through faithfulness to prayer and virtuous action.

**Leader:** Mother of God, when the divine child pushed forth from your womb, he uttered his first cry.

**All:** May I believe in the goodness within me that is yet to resound.

**Leader:** Mother of God, the newly born child in your arms engendered awe, mystery and wonder.

**All:** May I, too, reverence and be awed by the way that the Divine One enters my life.  
Amen.

**SILENCE**

## DISCUSSION

- Which of the prayers we just offered speaks to your heart most powerfully today? Why?
- What do you identify with most in Mary's story:
  - The annunciation
  - The visitation
  - The birth of Jesus
  - Losing/finding Jesus in Jerusalem
  - The Wedding Feast of Cana
  - Standing at the foot of the cross/holding the body of her dead son
  - Pentecost in the Upper Room
- How are Mother Seton and/or Mother Xavier like Mary, our first mother in faith?

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**LEADER:** Let us pray to our Father God, Father of mercy, of greatness, of Israel, of Mary...

**SIDE 1:** Spirit of love, linger long at the door of our hearts. Call to us time and again until we hear your voice and respond to you.

**SIDE 2:** Teach us to listen for you in every corner of our lives and to await your messengers in the most unexpected situations and conditions.

**SIDE 1:** Keep nudging us to move toward growth when our resistance holds us back. When we question the impracticality or the seeming impossibility of these nudges, give us wisdom and courage to let go of what restrains us.

**SIDE 2:** Still and quiet our souls. May we hear the whisper of your divine call, asking us each day to accept the treasure of your life within us.

**SIDE 1:** May the music of Mary's own trustful response sing in our spirits. Gift us with the ability to move forward into the unknown, confident that you will guide and direct us.

**ALL:** Mary, thank you for your courageous "yes". Like you, we are not alone in the call to face an unknown future. May we trust that the Holy One will shelter us and accompany us on our spiritual journey. May the spirit of your child, Jesus, live on in us. May we, too, be people of great love, carrying the Divine Presence in the womb of our hearts.

## BLESSING

**Leader:** May the Father bless us, as he blessed Mary, with an indwelling of the Spirit, that we, like her, may birth Jesus – this day and all days - into a world that longs for him. We ask this in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.