

HOMILIES FROM THE HERMITAGE

(and other things)

On view of the current isolation and detachment from normal ministry, it seemed good to provide some other ways in which to keep in contact. There will be some 'thoughts' (not each day), some shared ideas and maybe some pleasantries.

CORONA 4

THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY

She was there

There is a famous painting in which the powers of heaven stand still and held their breath while they await the split-second before the message of Gabriel and the answer Mary.

And she said, 'YES'

It is always best with Mary to find her in the Gospel. In the Eastern Church the Feast of the Annunciation is never lost nor deferred. Even on Good Friday, the Feast of the Annunciation was celebrated after the services of the Passion. For the Annunciation was the first and essential event for Mary, when her acceptance of the angel's message enabled God's plan of Salvation as He wished. This is Mary's root glory as Jesus says in St. Luke 11/28—'blessed is she who heard the Word of God and keep it': and He is the Word and she literally kept Him.

Mary is marked with three virtues: obedience, faith and love: but there is another quality which marked her; she was there.

She was there when Gabriel called

She was there when Elizabeth needed help.

She was there essentially at Bethlehem

She was there at the Temple with Simeon

She was there at the Cana wedding and discovered the shortage of wine

She was faithful to the end on Calvary

She was there when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost

We learn her faith at the Annunciation: her practical charity for Elizabeth: her mother's love at her Son's birth: the ongoing faithfulness unto the Cross.

And all because she was *there*. Are *we* there when we should be?. Are we AWOL? Do we avoid difficult choices 'for every good reason'? Are we aware of others needs as those at Cana? Are we willing to stand by Jesus' Cross? Are we there when the Spirit calls us?

Mary's message to us is very clear 'Do whatever He tells you'.

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A true tale: a few weeks ago I was coming across a roundabout when a car swished past. I felt like making a noise as a challenge: then I noted the number plate

MRS I NAG

and I passed by on the other side: it was plainly a personal number plate!