

# The Magnificat

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In calling forth women's voices, we stand in the spirit of our signature song in this company of women--the canticle of Mary, the singer of the song of justice. In the encounter of Mary with her pregnant elder cousin, Elizabeth, both women "are empowered to speak with prophetic voices...crying out in joy, warning, and hope for the future...to support women's struggles for equal justice and care, for themselves and for others." 1 This is "a revolutionary song of salvation whose concrete social, economic, and political dimensions cannot be blunted. People are hungry because of triple monies being exacted for empire, client-king, and temple. ...Mary's canticle praises God for the kind of salvation that involves concrete transformations..." 2 And the message of this song is "so subversive that for a period during the 1980s the government of Guatemala banned its public recitation." Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez claims that, "Any exegesis is fruitless that attempts to tone down what Mary's song tells us about preferential love of God for the lowly and the abused, and about the transformation of history that God's loving will implies." 3

## And today...?

"We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the people of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations." 4

"Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature. We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community." 5

The visitation encounter gives us "an image of Mary reassured and applauded by another woman, speaking with prophetic authority a liberating hymn of praise." As our voices sing this same song, we join the Holy One "who regards the suffering world with utmost mercy and summons us together into the struggle to build a just and human world." 6

-prepared by Mary Corbett, CND

1 Elizabeth Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, Continuum, New York, 2003, p. 260.

2 *Ibid*, pg. 269.

3 *Ibid*, pg. 269.

4 The Earth Charter.

5 Ibid.

6 Elizabeth Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints Continuum*, New York, 2003, p. 274.