

Chapter 4: The Word of God Made Present among Us

God is present to His people.

Chapter Summary

After receiving the message from Gabriel, Mary demonstrated perfect piety by visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Upon her arrival, Elizabeth's baby, John the Baptist, leaped in her womb. Elizabeth praised Mary with great joy because she recognized that Mary carried God the Savior. Mary was revealed as the new Ark of the Covenant. In the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant was a sacred vessel and God's physical dwelling place on earth. Mary, who was sinless, became the perfect vessel, or **tabernacle**, for Jesus, the eternal Word of God. We venerate her because through her, God was made man. By becoming man, God is most truly and fully present to us.

Justice and Piety to Family

We live with the cardinal virtue of justice when we give God and others what they are due. We can look at three examples in Mary's life to learn how to live with this cardinal virtue: the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. In this chapter, we will look at the Visitation.

The Visitation

"Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth" (Luke 1:39).

As Scripture says, Mary went "with haste" to visit Elizabeth. This reveals Mary as the perfect model of justice and piety. Piety is a part of the virtue of justice (see Virtue Tree on page 303). Piety is a virtue by which we give due honor and service to those we are indebted to. We should show piety to God, our parents and family, and our country.

Almost immediately after she heard the amazing plan of God for her to conceive and bear the Messiah, Mary did not think of herself and all the consequences in her life. Instead, she thought of **serving others**, specifically her elder family member Elizabeth. Mary rushed to Elizabeth's side to care for her and assist her in her pregnancy.

So much is said about children honoring their parents while children are young. However, God calls us to



follow Mary's example and show piety to our elderly family members as well. As a family, consider ways you can follow Mary's selfless example and give your elderly family and friends the honor they are due.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.