

December 2025

Mary, a Sign of Hope
2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, “Hope Does Not Disappoint”

As our thoughts start turning towards Christmas and the birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, let us take a few minutes to reflect on Mary, the Mother of God, especially during this Jubilee Year of Hope.

Pope Francis, in invoking this Jubilee Year, drew particular attention to Marian Shrines throughout the world as privileged places of hope, inviting us to emulate Mary’s faithful life and trust in God’s will.

Mary herself is seen as a Pilgrim of Hope who lived with faith and hope in God’s promises.

The story of the Archangel Gabriel appearing to Mary, the Annunciation, is a story where the angel tells Mary that she will conceive and give birth to the Son of God, Jesus. Mary accepts this news with humility, saying, “I am the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word” (Luke 1: 38).

Mary’s “yes” to God’s will is a wonderful example of trust and faith in God’s love and promises. Mary’s “yes” is a powerful example to us in our daily lives during this year to trust God’s will in times of blessings and in times of struggle.

Yet, at times, it is not always easy to be hopeful when we are confronted with life’s everyday difficulties and challenges. In this we are not alone. We have only to turn to the bible for examples of individuals struggling to embrace Mary’s “yes,” her humble acceptance of God’s plan – no matter what.

For example, let us contrast Mary’s faith-filled “yes” with Zechariah, with Joseph, and with Thomas who expressed doubt, a certain lack of understanding or trust in God’s promises.

Zechariah and Elizabeth were a righteous, elderly couple who were childless, despite praying for a son. One day, during Zechariah’s priestly duties in the temple, the Archangel Gabriel appears before him and announces that his wife would give birth to a son named John, who would prepare the way for the Lord. Zechariah questions the angel’s announcement, focusing rather on the obstacles of his old age and his wife’s infertility rather than trusting God’s power. His disbelief rendered him mute, unable to speak, until the child was born.

Joseph, a just man, in learning about Mary’s pregnancy before they had lived together, suspects infidelity, knowing the child was not his. His doubt leads him to quietly to annul their betrothal to protect Mary from public disgrace.

Thomas, also known as “Doubting Thomas,” is one of Jesus’ twelve disciples who initially refused to believe that Jesus had resurrected from the dead until he could physically see and touch the wounds from his crucifixion. Thomas wanted physical proof in Jesus’ resurrection, refusing to believe the other disciples’ eyewitness accounts.

Yet, these three initial doubters – Zechariah’s disbelief, Joseph’s initial skepticism, and Thomas’ demand for tangible proof – will be turned to joy, despair and hopelessness become hope and hopefulness.

Zechariah. After the birth of their son, John the Baptist, Zechariah’s voice was restored, and he prophesied that his son would be a prophet who would bring salvation.

Joseph. An angel later appeared to him in a dream, explaining that Mary’s child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and reassured him that it was not a sin to take her as his wife.

Thomas. A week later, Jesus appeared to the disciples again, and this time Thomas was present. Thomas touches Jesus’ wounds, and in response cries out, “My Lord and my God.” Jesus then said to Thomas, “You believe because you have seen me,” and added, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe” (John 20: 28-29).

We are all like Zechariah, Joseph, and Thomas. We all have our doubts.

Yet, we are also like Mary. We are asked to bring forth a Saviour to a broken and hurting world. The Gospel and the Church are pregnant with hope. In a world waiting for hope, we say “yes” to Christ and “yes” to a life filled with faith.

This Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, let us follow the example of Mary and follow in Christ’s footsteps, bring joy and hope to the world, starting with our families, friends, and neighbours.

Hope does not disappoint.

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