

## Reflection for Saturday 21 November

This Saturday the Church commemorates the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

This celebration commemorates the presentation of the child Mary in the Temple in Jerusalem when she was three. This feast was first kept in the eighth century both by the Church in the East and in the West. It symbolizes Mary's consecration of her life to the Lord.

Mary was under the direction of the Holy Spirit who filled her with grace from the moment of her Immaculate Conception. Mary never looked back. When the angel Gabriel came to visit her later to announce to Mary, and so to the world, that she was to be the bearer of the Son of God and so the Mother of God. What a wonderful vocation God gave her. At the end of the angel's visit Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me." Mary remained steadfast in that calling, although she knew there were difficulties ahead. God saw her through them all.

But Mary was not only mother she was disciple. Her discipleship was to be seen when at the wedding feast at Cana, when the wine ran out, Mary said to the attendants, "Do whatever he tells you." She witnessed to the manifestation of the divine glory of her son in turning the water into wine. Mary points away from herself to her son. You notice in icons of Mary and Jesus that her hand, which holds Jesus, points to him away from her. Mary wants us to pay attention to her son and not to her.

That is the clue as to how our discipleship of the Lord should be. The way we live, the words we speak, should direct others away from ourselves to him. We follow Jesus, through the grace of the sacraments, through our prayer with the Lord and be with him in Holy Scripture and we learn to become more like him in our daily lives. Jesus can turn the ordinariness of the water of our lives into the splendour of the wine of the Christ who lives in us. As St Paul puts in in his letter to the Galatians, "It is no longer I but Christ who lives in me."

So on this day when Mary was presented in the Temple let us pray to the Lord that we might become more Christ-like in our daily living and how in this pandemic and lockdown we can serve him more faithfully.

Roger Watson