

May 2017

My dear friends,



*Let love be genuine; hate what is evil,
hold fast to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection;
outdo one another in showing honor.
Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.
Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering,
persevere in prayer.
Contribute to the needs of the saints;
extend hospitality to strangers.
Bless those who persecute you;
bless and do not curse them.
Rejoice with those who rejoice,
weep with those who weep.
Live in harmony with one another; do not be
haughty,
but associate with the lowly.*

On May 31st, the church celebrates the “Visitation of Mary”, when the mother of Jesus, after hearing that she will give birth to the Son of God, travels to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who, though well beyond child-bearing years is pregnant with John the Baptist. We hear this story during Advent, but I believe that it is an Easter story as well. It describes what could be seen as the first Christian community to gather in worship, wonder, and mutual support. The two women shared their amazement and perhaps apprehensions as together they glorified God. This is the essence of Christian community.

The Epistle for this day is Romans 12:9-16b (shown above). In this letter to the church in Rome, Paul is encouraging the new Christians and exhorting them to live in love and to support each other. It’s not always easy to live up to our Christian standard. And some days, it seems downright impossible. Paul knew that the new Christians would need help, encouragement and support—just as we all do. First or 21st century—it is still the same. Our most important job is not only to spread the Good News, but also to help people sustain in their faith. Our Christian community is a wonderful thing—a gift of love, power and sustaining help. In this Easter season, remember Paul’s words of encouragement. Remember to let your light shine to others!

Your sister in Christ,

Mother Bonnie+