The Birthday of Our Lady | Tuesday 8 September 2020

Today is Tuesday the 8 September, the Birthday of Our Lady, in the 23rd week of Ordinary Time.

A group of Jesuits from Colombia sing Señora del Camino. ‘Our Lady of the Way,’ or perhaps better, ‘Our Lady of the Journey, show me the way to reach the Father, at the side of your Son.’

Today’s reading is from the Prophet Micah.

Micah 5:2-4

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, 
who are one of the little clans of Judah, 
from you shall come forth for me 
one who is to rule in Israel, 
whose origin is from of old, 
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time 
when she who is in labour has brought forth; 
then the rest of his kindred shall return 
to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, 
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great 
to the ends of the earth;

Today we celebrate the Birthday of Our Lady. This date comes from a revelation in the early 5th century as a night when someone heard the angels singing in heaven to celebrate her birth. The church uses this date when celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception, nine months earlier, on 8th December. This feast day, rather than the many titled feasts, perhaps celebrates Mary’s humanity best. Consider for a moment your image of Mary, perhaps a favourite artwork or statue, a place of pilgrimage or way of praying. Spend time in appreciation of this relationship with the mother of Jesus.

This reading from Micah is used by Matthew in his nativity narrative. It signifies almost eight hundred years of waiting before Bethlehem sends forth the One. Jesus does not step into our world from nowhere, but from ancient days, from a little clan, a family. From a woman who must, herself, be born and have life. A woman who may have been considered very ordinary, until the moment of her ‘Yes’. A woman who reminds us that no one is ordinary.

Listening to the reading again, we are reminded that we too are standing on shoulders of the many faithful who have gone before.

Who are the people who have inspired you? Teachers, religious, members of your own family, favourite saints? Take a moment to offer thanks for their place in your life. Share this time with the Lord.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.