



These are the names traditionally given to the mother and father of the Blessed Virgin Mary by a tradition that dates back to the second century. One of the early fathers of the church addressed Joachim and Anne in the following way: 'O blessed couple. All creation is in your debt, for through you is presented the noblest of gifts to the creator, namely a spotless Mother who alone was worthy for the creator'.

It was because of Joachim and Anne's own faith that Mary was able to make her great response of faith to God's call to her through the angel Gabriel. The parents of Mary were the grandparents of Jesus. They helped to create that environment of faith in which he would grow in wisdom and stature before others and God. Today's feast encourages us to remember the people of faith who went before us, from whom we have descended. We might remember our own grandparents and the faith by which they lived, and which helped to light the flame of faith in our own lives. In the gospel reading, Jesus proclaims blessed the eyes that see and the ears that hear. He is referring there to the eyes and ears of faith, all those among his own contemporaries who recognized God's powerful presence in his own ministry.

Jesus declares that many of the prophets and holy people of the past longed to see and hear what his contemporaries had the privilege of seeing and hearing. We share in that same privilege. We give thanks for all we have been allowed to see and hear of God's presence in Jesus and for all those people of faith who preceded us and have made it possible for us to see and hear with the eyes and ears of faith.

In the parable of Sower, God's word can only take root in a receptive heart which is docile and ready to hear what God has to say. One lesson is

clear: *the harvest is sure*. While some seed will fall by the wayside and some fall on shallow ground and never come to maturity, and some be choked to death by the thorns; nonetheless, a harvest will come. The seed that falls on good soil, on the receptive heart, will reap abundant fruit. Yes, St. Joachim and St. Anne received God's word in their hearts – good soil and bear hundred-fold.

Are you teachable and eager to learn God's truth? Are you ready to grow in the Faith which is transmitted through our fore-parents? And do you allow anything to keep you from submitting to God's word with joy and trusting obedience?

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, help me to guard the word you have planted in my heart that no doubt or temptation may keep me from believing and obeying you. May I be fruitful in your service and may I never fear to speak of you to others and to share with them the good news of the Gospel. St. Joachim and St. Anne pray for us.

Jesus, I Trust In You