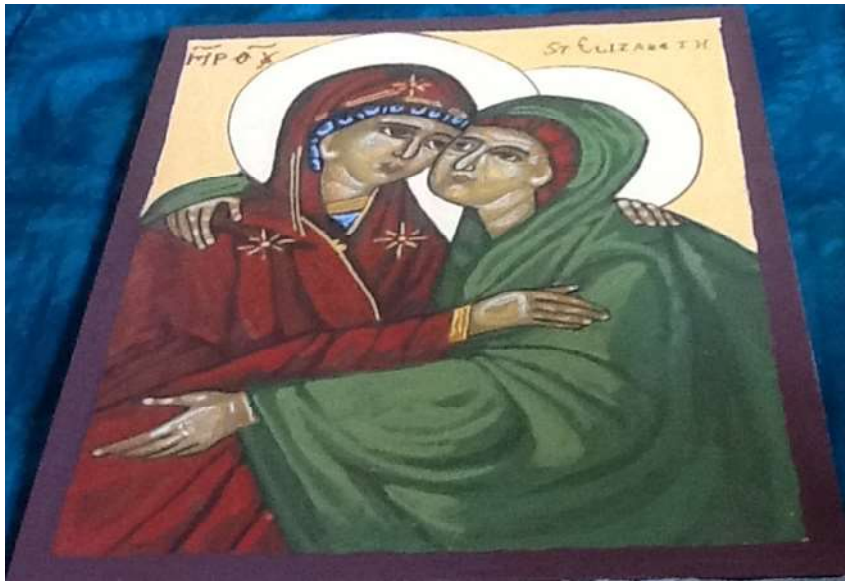


# ***An incredible visitation***



and I am  
and I am  
deeply grateful!  
deeply grateful!

'catches  
'catches  
my heart  
my heart  
off guard'  
off guard'

**Kate Creedon dmj**

**Rome , December 2012**

## Day 1 Dec 13

Surprised by  
how quickly time went by -  
Gratitude for-  
'no thinking'  
only openness to  
receive instructions  
and letting go- and  
simply a sense of being drawn  
into something beyond me  
yet knowing I am part of it.

Aware of my lack of faith  
that something beautiful  
will be born – yet  
joy, peace exists -  
allowing patience to be and  
a waiting with Mary  
in darkness.

For the first time, for ages,  
the desire to journal again  
catches me by surprise!  
The presence of a friend,  
with whom laughter resides,  
just below the surface,  
and bubbles so easily,  
eases tension, anxieties.  
Sheer gift and joy-

Your hand on my shoulder God,  
Your love experienced,  
You are with me,  
bringing me home -  
back to you  
in such an unexpected way.

Wasting time with you,  
away from the constant  
daily demands frees me  
to settle into a space -  
a different where creativity  
Becomes possible again and  
enables fresh perspective

Soul is nourished,  
even in the not knowing.  
The initial coat important  
yet not the finished product.  
Many coats required before  
You will emerge,  
before you will be  
born afresh.

Excitement, wonder  
anticipation enfolds me  
as I willingly,  
lovingly,  
walk this  
waylessness  
unknowing

## Day 2 Dec 14

The incline steepens,  
the air is different-  
profound attentiveness to detail  
is necessary,  
to distinguish shades  
of darkness and light-

perceived at first  
to be easy,  
I find myself struggling  
to really see,  
know, sense and feel  
where light is needed,  
where I must bring  
the light.

A small sense of relief  
as features come  
into focus again  
and obscurity clears  
for a moment -

yet the struggle  
increases –  
stokes are hard  
when softness is required,  
lines are broad  
and uncertain  
when thinness and firmness will  
give more shape -

As the day draws to a close  
a deep fatigue  
seeps through-  
a flowing out of energy  
just to keep faithful  
and night prayer seems so apt-  
Still deep gratitude within-  
for this all consuming way-

And then—  
another kind of  
presence subtly felt-  
new life stirs within  
and I am somewhat  
shaken –  
life is poured not out  
but in – nourishing and  
sustaining  
the not yet born!

Being pregnant is not easy  
carrying and caring for  
a life one does not know-  
another side to wonder,  
anticipation and  
excitement -  
How can this come about?  
How will it really be  
at the end moment  
when that new life  
emerges?

The need for true companionship,  
a holding, warm,  
reassuring, presence -  
is keenly felt -  
in these uncertain  
unknowing times.

Elizabeth, Mary,  
wisdom women to each other,  
soul friends and mentors  
pray for me  
and be with me  
on this waylessness  
unknowing  
that I too,  
like you,  
will remain  
faithful and faith-filled  
to the end.

### **Day 3 Dec 15**

A casual comment,  
'what is it with you that hands  
and fingers keep disappearing?'  
stays just below the surface,  
as I eagerly anticipate  
writing in the lighter shades  
for Elizabeth.

Watching a demonstration  
on 'bringing up the flesh'  
my own flesh groans -  
remembering past struggles.

Tongue in check,  
aware of my trepidation  
I go with my fear and the flesh -  
to my utter surprise, this time,  
paint flows more smoothly,  
difference is quite visible and  
astonishing.

Gazing to observe the lighter shades  
fault lines now become apparent  
on Elizabeth's cloak!  
Disappointment, dismay surges  
upwards!  
Consoled for a moment when I hear  
'it will be ok, remember -  
it is your first'  
I am quickly challenged!  
'You have time and if you  
want to risk -  
you could go back to basic color'.

For another moment I wonder,  
will it be worth it?  
will I simply repeat?  
will colour lift and leave just  
patches, holes?

Though not easy,  
awareness of the need  
to pay attention to detail  
guides my brush.  
Slowly and in spite of more  
mistakes  
small progress is made!

Over lunch, a soul conversation,  
brings light to the disappearing  
hands and fingers!  
Hands, symbolizing mastery,  
and the ability to let be...

Wow! How often do I ponder  
from so many different angles,  
possible meanings, significance!  
Always trying to understand  
more fully what is going on,  
always looking for meaning,  
always, always, always!

Today, I sense  
the invitation 'to let be' -  
as deeply challenging.  
Remembering the necessity  
of many coats,  
the need to wait for each  
level to dry  
before applying the next.

Each one having its own impact  
though not always  
so very visible to the eye.

How I need to grow  
in my ability to recognize  
when waiting is what is necessary-  
when patience is required before  
the next coat can be applied and  
to be at peace in the waiting.  
God to do unto me as You  
desire in this waiting time.

Mary, you who kept faith  
on Good Friday and Holy Saturday  
pray for me,  
Elizabeth, you who kept faith  
allowing God to surprise you,  
even when humanly speaking,  
time had long past,  
pray for me  
that I too may grow  
in faith and trust in God's  
mysterious ways -  
allowing God to do unto me  
as God desires.

*Day 4 Dec 16*

Awareness of tension within  
as the day begins,  
not sure of its source,  
just the sense that the incline  
will steepen still further-

Misinterpreting instructions  
written I begin a step too far-  
the undoing, a challenge - ,

even Mary's blue  
vanishes this time and  
I have to begin again!

Close to despair I welcome  
the break -  
some small consolation  
enters in as I listen  
to groans of pain  
discouragement,  
disappointment.

Additional lighting eases  
the work a little -  
edges and shades become  
more visible,  
background detail is  
filled in more easily-

While paint no longer  
seems to flow smoothly,  
with only patches appearing -  
to the trained and trusted eye  
all is ok, it is looking good!

Remembering my prayer of the morning, my  
need for faith -  
like Mary and Elizabeth,  
when humanly speaking all was lost  
something shifts within-  
The journey is not easy,  
yet, it is becoming possible –

Sensing the thin small sliver of faith  
I embark on 2<sup>nd</sup> lights  
with greater trust and ease.

Though flaws are evident,  
small adjustments are made  
and paint flows,  
covers and enhances.

Journeying in this  
waylessness unknowing –  
with even a thin small sliver of faith-  
enables me to come to core again,  
enables something new to  
actually begin  
to emerge-

Gratitude this night  
for the wonderful gift of friendship-  
the safe sharing space -  
where pain, passion and possibility  
can be explored and held-  
for that true companionship,  
that warm, encouraging presence  
that words cannot describe -

Laughter bubbling forth  
expresses all -  
the shop at the corner,  
the three old houses in Rome,  
take on a symbolism that  
only we can know!  
at homeness is experienced in the marrow of  
my bones –  
and an enveloping presence  
draws me gently  
into a sleep of deep peace.

**Day 5 Dec 17**

Seeing the icon of the Visitation  
in our prayer space this morning  
warms my heart- and I ponder  
how will I receive Your visitation  
today?

Though relaxed,  
catastrophe strikes at first light!  
colour runs as I apply the wash  
and disbelief strikes hard!

Calmness and steadiness  
of our guide, touches me deeply.  
Her gentle, reassuring presence,  
throughout these days,  
holds me at bay, yet  
challenges me to risk  
where even I,  
would not have dared,  
before this moment.  
Such a beautiful, humble, stance,  
an enlivening presence -  
freely shared with all!

Whitewash holds a whole new  
meaning-  
moving the water around  
is what it's all about-  
no heavy handedness needed!  
Stars and golden lines appear  
inspite of initial horror  
and trepidation!

The background, which flowed  
so smoothly yesterday stretches  
my faith and patience.  
Cost after coat and yet,  
after all this time, all this effort,  
only blotches and holes appear!

Nothing is ever what it seems  
at first glance!  
I need to steady, gaze,  
observe, apply,  
with a confidence and surety  
that only You can give!

The day ends.  
Repair work done in silence,

unnoticed, makes all the  
difference.

The emerging image becoming so much more  
than I had ever thought  
or imagined it could be!

A journey of companionship  
and faith is being lived.  
The helping hand,  
the encouraging smile,  
the laughter and silence  
comingling together  
deepens this shared experience.

How the icon has subtly  
worked on me  
Incredible!

A visitation, that  
has caught my heart off guard  
and has led me to places  
where I would never have  
thought possible before -  
I know, I am deeply blessed-

May I become more open  
to all the visitations that lie ahead.  
May I welcome You as  
You have welcomed me.  
May Mary's gentleness,  
Elizabeth' wisdom, inspire me  
all the days of my life.



*Day 6 Dec 18*

Full to overflowing,  
tears pour out freely  
as I try to capture in word  
something of the incredible  
journey lived so deeply.

Extraordinary visitation,  
incredible beauty witnessed -  
experienced -  
the unthinkable coming  
to birth- and  
a deep awareness growing  
of a journey ending  
yet only just beginning.

Walking in waylessness  
unknowing,  
allowing myself to be lead  
is truly spirit filled  
and blessed.

I, of little faith,  
had no idea at all that  
the pull and draw would be  
so strong - so captivating  
that at the end  
a deep knowing resides within -  
this journey must continue.

I walked a way  
not knowing, even what the one  
next step would be -  
not knowing what it would mean  
or where it might lead til  
I literally followed the way outlined.

Not knowing instructions  
unclearly heard would  
bring disaster to my unknowing  
heart - till  
miracle of miracles,  
with the stoke of a brush,  
by a knowing heart,  
a new annunciation could be heard,  
returning me to base -  
simply by a different way.

What visitation!  
What a graced experience that  
can only be lived and treasured  
to know and sense it's depth.

Like a young mother  
I gaze on this beautiful child,  
feeling so protective,  
so absorbed by its presence.  
I want to simply sit and  
gaze and gaze and gaze -

Incredible, incredible, incredible!  
my mantra, trying to express  
something of the  
depth of a graced reality  
lived and experienced these days.

Mary, Elizabeth, you walked  
your way unknowing-  
allowing only faith and trust  
in the One who called you  
to be your guide, your strength -  
Pray for me that I too  
will grow like you, believing deeply  
in the mysterious life conceived within.  
Enable me to wait patiently,  
trustingly, faithfully,  
for God' time to bring to birth.

Blessed am I to have had  
this opportunity-  
Blessed am I to have had  
the company of a great  
teacher and many companions-  
Blessed are we who have grown  
as we companioned  
each other along the way -

Blessed are we and all people  
who believe that the promise  
made to us by our God  
will be fulfilled.

To God be  
the glory now  
and forever more  
Amen.