

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD 2013

Theme: The Son of God Eats Lima Beans

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The following is a sort of legend, that is, a totally fictional story with a few nuggets of truth thrown in.

Six year old Jesus was seated on bench at the family table lingering over a small pile of lima beans on his supper plate.

Mary, having already cleared and washed the other dishes, sat around the corner of the table from him.

Joseph had long since returned to his workshop.

Pushing a few beans aside with his bread, Jesus said:

"Mama, I've been wondering about something, wondering a lot."

"Can I help?" asked Mary after a few moments.

"Well, you know how you and Joseph are always telling me that I am special, that I am God's Son. Mama, I don't know what that means?"

Mary swallowed hard, "No, my son, I don't suppose you would. None of us really does."

"When I play with my cousins Jude and Simon they seem just like me; they have ten fingers and ten toes just like me; they act just like I do," said Jesus.

"Yes, they laugh and cry just like you," added Mary.

"Except Jude, he cries more than me, more than anybody," said Jesus quickly.

"He surely does," chuckled Mary in agreement.

"So how am I so different?" quizzed Jesus, undeterred in his quest for answers.

Mary thought for a moment and then said: "It's not that you are different, Jesus, you're not; you're just like everyone else. But you are special. You are God's Son,"

"But what does that mean, Mama? I know I don't call Joseph my Dad but what does it mean?" pleaded the boy as water pooled around his eyes.

Mary gently put her hand aside his cheek, water pooling in her own eyes, and said: "I guess none of us really knows what it means yet."

"Some things happened before you were born, things you are still too young to understand, things that told Joseph and me you were oh, so special and in fact God's Son."

"As God's Son, God has special things in mind for you when you grow up, things that you don't yet know, things that neither Joseph nor even I yet know."

"These things will become clear to you as you get older and understand your heart and hear God's voice speaking to your heart.

"Don't worry: if you are really God's Son God will make it clear to you what it means."

"For now we have to do everything we can to help you grow up to be strong and ready for whatever God wants of you: including eating lima beans!

"Uck!" exclaimed the boy, pushing the plate away.

Mary firmly pulled it back in front of him.

After a few moments, Jesus looked up at her as if a light had dawned on him: "Mama, do you do all the Rabbi's dirty laundry so he will take me for the two extra 'Torah' lessons each week?"

"Yes," said his mother softly, "Joseph and I want you to have the best understanding of God's holy word we can possibly give you. We can't

afford to pay him so I do his laundry as a sort of trade. We want you to be ready for whatever God has in mind for you.”

“And do you know how I always take you whenever I visit the sick widow Misha or Joseph has you help him repair the houses of the poor aliens over by dump: we want you to know how to care for others as your sisters and brothers.”

“All this is to help you grow up and be ready for whatever it is God has in mind for you.”

Jesus was reflective for a few moments and then said: “And, Mama, I bet you make me take Grandpa for those long walks in the countryside so he can tell me more of his stories too!”

“Yes,” said Mary with a wide grin, “Grandpa’s stories are part of the plan too.”

“Well, that’s okay,” said Jesus, “Grandpa’s stories are sometimes funny and they always make me think.”

“But I still do not understand,” said Jesus with arms crossed his chest, “why if I’m so special and the Son of God, why I have to eat these terrible-tasting lima beans.”

“Well,” said a smiling Mary crossing her arms on her chest, “because they are good for you, because we don’t waste food,” – she snatched a bean from the plate and popped it in her mouth– “and because I said so, and I’m the Mother of God.”