

**October 2026**

***Reflection***

**A Level Playing Field**

Jealousy may flow from a perceived lack of access to achievement. When you see extraordinary gifts in someone else, you may despair that a door has been closed to such success.

The woman from the crowd in today's Gospel voices a sentiment that may have emerged from such jealousy. Perhaps she was disappointed in her children. Perhaps a neighbor had complained about their behavior that day. Perhaps she questioned her abilities to be a good mother.

While listening to Jesus and marveling at his words, her eyes fell upon someone else in the crowd: Mary. How pleased Mary must have been over the accomplishments of her adult son. Close enough to Jesus' ears, the woman's lips pronounced the blessedness of Mary, who carried him in her womb and nursed him after his birth.

Did Jesus sense jealousy in those words? Did this woman perhaps think she completely lacked access to the achievements of Mary? If so, Jesus opened a door for her and anyone who feels jealous of another's opportunities. The playing field is more level than you think. Each person has gifts of differing measure, but achievement is relative to gifts. It is open to everyone.

Do you wish to excel? All you have to do is hear the Word of God and observe it. Do that, and you've accomplished so much that others may become jealous of you.

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