

VISITATION OF MARY WITH ELIZABETH

Opening Hymn: Hail Mary, Gentle Woman

Leader: Today, we honor Mary, the Mother of God. Through her example we learn to follow Jesus. Mary was the first and greatest disciple, because she believed and trusted in God's promise to her. Mary is our model, our teacher, our guide, our inspiration, our sweetness and our hope. We raise our eyes up to Mary, as together we pray, The Memorare.

All: Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petition, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Leader: May is the month of Mary and it concludes with one of the most beautiful Marian Feast Days—The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. This joyful event is also depicted in the second joyful Mystery of the Rosary. Let us now listen to Luke's account of the Visitation.

Scripture: Luke 1: 39-56

Reader 1: The last part of the Annunciation ends with Mary's "Fiat"--- that is Mary's Yes to God. The exact words are: "Behold I am the handmade of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.

All: Lord, we ask for the courage to say, "Yes" to our call to serve God's people.

Reader 2: Mary did not keep the gift of Jesus to herself, but went in haste to share the gift with others. She travelled a great distance to share the news with her cousin, Elizabeth.

All: Lord, we ask that we will be inspired to bring the Good News of Jesus to the whole world.

Reader 3: Mary did not procrastinate, put off, delay, make excuses, rationalize or justify postponing her trip. Rather, she followed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and acted immediately.

All: Lord, send your Holy Spirit upon us to give light to our minds and strength to our wills that we may know and fulfill your great law of charity.

Reader 4: Imagine Mary's long journey to visit Elizabeth. Her joy, her quick pace, her awareness of Jesus within her, her determination to carry out God's will despite the possible obstacles.

All: Lord give us the strength to carry out God's will for our lives.

Reader 5: Remember that little Jesus is already present in the womb of Mary. Therefore, this trip, is indeed, a Eucharistic Procession (a Corpus Christie procession).

All: Lord, we beg for the grace to have a greater faith, love and devotion towards the Eucharist.

Reader 6: Being with Jesus and Mary is the true and authentic source of joy. Mary's canticle emphasizes this truth: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior".

All: Lord, we ask that we may always give praise to God in all that we do.

Reader 7: Most likely, Mary greeted Elizabeth with the typical Jewish greeting, SHALOM—peace be with you. Our homes, our families, our communities, our parishes, our activities, our CWL councils, should be characterized by a "SHALOM" atmosphere.

All: Lord, we ask that we may always create a warm and welcoming environment for everyone we encounter.

Reader 8: When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant, John, leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said: "Most blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb".

All: Lord, give us eyes to see that our loving service to others is, indeed, a blessing for us.

Reader 9: Both of these women, in our modern society, could be candidates for an abortion. One, Mary was very young and the other Elizabeth was very old. However, both had an infinite trust in God's Divine Providence and gave birth to the greatest: St. John the Baptist and Jesus, the Son of God.

All: Lord, we ask that by our meditation on the mystery of the Visitation, we may be staunch defenders of all human life from conception to natural death.

Reader 10: Love for God cannot limit itself to words, but must manifest itself in actions, in service, in seeing Jesus truly present in others. Not only did Mary greet Elizabeth, but she also actively served her aged, pregnant cousin, in her need.

All: Lord, we pray that we will always live out our Baptismal call to service, with a joyful heart.

All: Closing Prayer

Lord Our God, Savior of the human family, you brought salvation and joy to the home of Elizabeth through the visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We ask that in obedience to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we too may be motivated to bring Christ to others and proclaim your greatness by the praise of our lips and the holiness of our service. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen

Closing Hymn: Immaculate Mary