

Reflections

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Mary's Visitation

Our entire life, when it is authentically Christian, is directed toward love. Only love makes our existence great and fruitful and guarantees us eternal salvation. And we know that Christian love has two dimensions. The **horizontal** dimension: to love mankind, our brothers and sisters. And the **vertical** dimension: to love God, our Lord.

It is easy to speak about love and charity, but it is difficult to live them because to love means to serve and to serve requires renunciation of self. Therefore, the Lord gave us the Blessed Virgin as an ideal image. She is the great servant of God, and likewise, the servant of mankind.

At the hour of the Annunciation, She proclaims herself the handmaid of the Lord. She surrenders her entire life in order to fulfill the task which God has entrusted to her through the angel. In an instant, She changes all the plans and projects she had. She completely forgets her own interests.

The same thing happens to her with Elizabeth. She learns that her cousin is with child and she leaves immediately, in spite of the long trip. And she stays with her for three months, attending her until the birth of John the Baptist.

It does not occur to her to feel superior, and she does not look for pretexts for being pregnant or for not being able to dare such a long trip. She does all this because she knows that in the Kingdom of God, the first are the ones who know how to become the servants to everyone.

Our own Christian life should also be formed and developed in these same two dimensions: the commitment to brothers and sisters and the service to God. And one dimension cannot be separated from the other.

Therefore, the more we want to communicate with men and women, so much more must we be in communion with God. And the more we want to be near God, so much more must we be near mankind.

What else does the Gospel tell us? It tells us of some of the miraculous happenings in the encounter of the two women: the child leaps for joy in the womb of his mother; Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit, she recognizes the Lord present and she begins to prophesy. And we ask ourselves: Is it the Blessed Virgin who performs these miracles? It can only be explained by the intimate and profound unity between Mary and Jesus. That unity begins with the Annunciation and endures throughout her life and beyond. And it is manifested for the first time in the encounter between Mary and Elizabeth.

Mary never acts alone, but always in this perfect unity between Mother and Son. Where Mary is, Jesus is also. It is the mystery of the infinite fruitfulness of her life as mother.

And if we want to be like Her, then it should also be the mystery of our life. In which sense? We unite ourselves, we attach ourselves to Mary, our Mother and Queen. What does She then do? She attaches us – with all the roots of our being – to her Son, Jesus Christ.

Because Mary is the place of encounter with Christ, She leads us towards Him, She guides us, She takes care of us and accompanies us on our journey towards Him.

But, Mary not only leads us towards Christ, She brings – above all – Jesus to the world and to mankind. It is her great task as Mother of God.

And on her visit to the home of Elizabeth, she realizes – for the first time – her great mission: She takes her Son to her. And the Lord of the world, incarnate in her maternal body, manifests his presence through these miracles.

Mary did this more than 2,000 years ago. But she also does it today: she brings Christ to all of us.

Questions for reflection

1. Do I take Christ to others?
2. How do I serve others?
3. Am I an element of unity?

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