



ALC Animators
SCHEDA N°2- 2023

2nd stage
**THE VISITATION OF MARY: CONTEMPLATING CHARITY THAT
BECOMES SERVICE**

Gospel of Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary set out for the mountain and hurried to a city of Judah. Entering Zechariah's house, she greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. Then Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out with a loud voice: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. To what must the mother of my Lord come to me? Because as soon as I heard your greeting, the baby leapt for joy in my womb. Blessed is she who believed in the fulfillment of the Lord's words."

Mary soon set out. We too must be constantly on the move, without tiring, without stopping, without being discouraged. "The grace of the Spirit ignores slowness" (Saint Ambrose).

Mary is the Virgin of the journey and of hope. When the journey ends, hope will also end, because this is the virtue of the wayfarer, of the pilgrim.

To be a prophet of hope is to create in others a commitment to journey. To communicate hope to others, to create in them capacity for hope is to make them walk. But, for this, we must show our brothers and sisters that, if we get tired, we do not give up, and if we experience the cross, we weep and suffer, but we do not die: we continue to walk.

The contemplation of Mary becomes service. Mary hears a call and sets out because the Word of God has been communicated to her and she knows that her cousin needs her: contemplation is not true when it becomes an agitated service or a sterile activism, but when it becomes a serene service.

Saint Grignon de Montfort suggests a very practical exercise to imitate Mary Most Holy: in our daily Magnificat. From the treatise on true devotion to the Blessed Virgin by Grignon de Montfort (no. 225):

"Saint Elizabeth praises Mary and calls her happy for having believed; Mary, a faithful echo of God, intones: "The Lord magnifies my soul; my soul glorifies the Lord": what Mary did on this occasion, she does every day; when He is praised, loved, honored, or given, God be praised."

Saint Magdalene also conceived service to needy people in an atmosphere of exquisite charity. In a letter to her friend Durini, from whom Maddalena had received pleasant attention when she was ill and wants to repay her, even if the distance does not allow it, she expresses her wish in writing:

"Dearest Carolina, dear friend, I cannot, as I would like, come in person to visit you and keep you company as when you visited me when I was sick, but I want, at least, to spend a few moments with you with less pleasure, but not with less affection. You know, dearest, that I, for my part, on that occasion, was lucky enough to have your excellent friendship, which now unites me with you ... That's why I think we can't love ourselves more than we love ourselves." M. A.D. a C. Durini, 16 August 1802, pp.146-147.

This letter shows the affection and understanding of the heart of Saint Magdalene and shows us how we too can relate to and accompany our brothers in the service of Charity. The creative charity of Saint Magdalene reminds us of the words of Saint Thomas: "Nature **does not exclude grace**".

May St Ambrose's reflection guide our sharing and Marian prayer:

From Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan (397)

"Mary hesitated, but she believed, and therefore she obtained the fruit of faith. Blessed are you, said Elizabeth, who believed. But you too are happy, you who have listened and believed. In fact, every soul that believes, receives and generates the Word of God and recognizes his works.

May Mary's soul be in each one to glorify the Lord; may there be in each one the spirit of Mary to rejoice in God. The soul exalts the Lord and his spirit rejoices in God because, given in soul and spirit to the Father and to the Son, it venerates with pious love the one God, from whom everything proceeds and the one Lord through whom all things exist".