

Homily – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Profession of Vows, Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence – May 31, 2024

It gives me great joy to witness your own response, Sister, to the great things the Lord has already done for you. Congratulations to you and your sisters! Thank you for sharing your blessing with all of us!

As soon as Mary received the good news, she set out in haste to share her blessing. Mary's Magnificat is a profound expression of her faith and her total trust in God. She acknowledges the great things God has done in her and through her. You too, Sister, are called to align your will with God's.

Upon reflecting on Mary's mission during a celebration of renewal of religious vows, Pope Francis highlighted: *"We are faced with mystery."* Mary's journey was not without challenges, yet her faith remained steadfast. Similarly, you will face difficulties and tensions between your charism and the concrete realities of life. But remember, it is in these moments that your faith is tested and refined. Embrace these difficulties with the hope that the Holy Spirit is always with you, ready to fill you with grace. Just as Mary carried Jesus in her womb and brought Him to Elizabeth, you are called to carry Christ within you and bring His presence to all you meet.

In the first reading, from the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul says, *"Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer."* These words are not just instructions; they are a roadmap for your journey as you commit your life to God through your vows.

Zeal is the fire that keeps our faith alive. It is the passion that drives us to serve God with all our hearts. As you take this step today, remember that your zeal for the Lord is the access you provide for the

strength that comes from the Holy Spirit. Let it be fervent and unwavering. Your commitment today is a testament to that zeal, a burning desire to live out your vocation in fullness.

“Be fervent in spirit.” This fervor is the inner fire of the Holy Spirit, a flame that purifies, enlightens, and guides. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers you to live out your vows with courage and joy. The same Spirit who filled Mary with grace, and led her to say “yes” to God’s plan, will also fill you with the grace to embrace your calling fully.

“Serve the Lord.” Your life of service reflects our Lord’s own life. In every act of kindness, every moment of prayer, every instance of self-giving, you serve God. Your service is not just a duty but a joy, a response to God’s immense love for you.

“Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer.” These words encapsulate the essence of a committed religious life. Hope is the anchor that holds us steady amidst the storms of life. Afflictions will come, as they are part of our journey, but they are opportunities to grow in faith and reliance on God. Prayer is your lifeline, the constant communion with the One who has called you by name.

The assurance of God’s presence among us is a reminder that you are never alone. God is with you, guiding, strengthening, and loving you every step of the way. Trust that the Almighty will continue to do great things through you, and like Mary, may all generations see the blessings of your faithfulness. The Lord, who has begun this good work in you, will bring it to completion.

We entrust you to Our Lady of Guadalupe, for your life to be a living Magnificat, a continuous song of praise to God. May you draw strength from the Holy Spirit, find joy in serving the Lord, and persevere in hope and prayer.