

# MARIAN PRAYER VIGIL

**SETTING AND ATMOSPHERE:** *After a brief period of INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, the leader will say the following to the assembly:*

**INTRODUCTION:** We are called here by Jesus and his Mother Mary. What son would not respond when his mother calls? Today we have heard the same call as Saint Catherine: “The Blessed Virgin is waiting for you in the chapel.” And we have come, happy to see her and listen to her.

We sense her presence among us. She is a model for humanity, a loving mother. She is the mother of God, and at the same time God’s beloved daughter, full of grace and mercy. She had no other answer than YES.

May this evening be a celebration of faith and love. May Mary teach us to live as children of God and as brothers and sisters.

## **SONG**

**INTRODUCTION:** Tonight we gather to spend time with Mary. Like Catherine, we don’t want to waste a single moment. She has much to say to us. Imagine that we are kneeling at her side, our hands resting in hers. And we let her speak to us. It is true that she prefers to listen. How she treasured the word and held it in her heart! Mary speaks to us best through contemplative silence. Because the most important things are indescribable, the deepest experiences cannot be put into words.

We have the great fortune of having seven examples of her words, words that have been included in the Gospels. Tonight we will meditate on them, if only briefly. We will keep them close to our heart in order not to forget them.

## **FIRST WORDS:**

*“Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?"” (Lk 1:34)*

Music

**Reflection:** Mary conversed with the angel. This is a way of saying that she talked with God. Mary felt frightened because the good news she had received was so startling, it was not at all in line with her plans. For this reason she asked for an explanation, not for proof. Her question did not imply a lack of faith, but rather a lack of understanding of the means.

She was a virgin, although she was engaged. In order to have a child, didn’t she need to be married to Joseph? Didn’t she need to not be a virgin? Mary was really frightened. She knew that God is great and merciful, but how could something like this happen? And how could God have noticed her, she who was not anyone important? What did she need to do? You also, when facing a problem, difficulty or misunderstanding, ask yourself: What do I need to do?

The angel answered: Nothing, you only need to let it happen. It is a matter of God and God’s love, it is a matter of the Spirit. With God all things are possible. THE QUESTION Mary asked called for faith, humility, docility to God and a pure heart. There are many lessons in these first words.

## **TIME OF SILENCE**

## SECOND WORDS:

*“Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word.’” (Lk 1:38)*

### Music

**Reflection:** *Let it be done* is the blessed expression for which we are ever grateful. Here the world and history’s long time of Waiting comes to an end. First Mary admits her humbleness. She has just heard the greatest words of praise that a woman could ever hear, but she lives in truth. She knows she is humble, that she was created to serve, as a poor handmaid. She lives only for God and for others.

*Let it be done* is the Yes that makes it possible for God to come into humanity. It calls for docility, trust, and total commitment. It calls for an incredible act of faith, more than Abraham’s. It calls for renunciation of everything and placing her life into God’s hands in a radical way.

Mary had been preparing for this moment, for this Yes. Mary’s story is one that is completely affirmative. Her Yes is that of a committed daughter who trusts: Yes, Father, yes to your word, to your requests, to your love.

Mary our Mother, teach us how to say Yes.

## TIME OF SILENCE

## THIRD WORDS:

*“Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.” (Lk 1:39-40)*

### Music

**Reflection:** Here is the Our Lady of the Visitation. She is an expressive symbol of the pilgrim Church, in solidarity and in service. She has just had an experience of being a daughter, now she is a friend and sister, always a servant. She is putting her yes into action.

*She greeted Elizabeth:* These are her third words. Although her words of greeting are not mentioned, they must have been words of peace: *SHALOM*. Mary greets everyone with peace, a wish of plenitude that includes every form of grace, happiness and salvation. How beautiful this word must have sounded on her lips! She is the Queen of Peace, a pilgrim of peace, offering abundant peace to all.

And we continue to have great need of this peace! May Mary continue to wish us peace: for each one of us, for our families, for the Association, for all people. She is the mother and bearer of Peace, who is Christ.

We cannot be content in just receiving this greeting, but we need to continue it, to re-echo her message, so that we in some way can bring about peace. May this message go from person to person, extending to all those in most need of peace. May our greeting of peace be spread through the places that have been damaged by the scourge of war.

## TIME OF SILENCE

### FOURTH WORDS:

*“And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord..." (Lk 1:46-55)*

Music

**Reflection:** These words of Mary are the most extensive and the most revolutionary. Let us pause and focus on the following:

- *Joyful and grateful praise:* She looks at God and looks at herself and cannot contain her gratitude. She sings of the gift of God's self to her, who has become a living being within her.
- *Grateful remembrance:* Because God's promises have begun to be fulfilled. This is the God who has gone to great lengths for his child Israel, for his child Mary, for all his daughters and sons who are descendents of Abraham in faith.
- *Hope-filled prophecy:* The time has come for everything to change. God has made a choice for those who are poor and humble. May all those who are poor and humble be led towards great hope. Mary is the Virgin of poor people and is in solidarity with them. God has shown his preference for them and gives them overflowing graces as he has done with Mary. Do we feel poor and humble? Are we in solidarity with them?

## TIME OF SILENCE

### FIFTH WORDS:

*“... and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." Lk 2:48*

Music

**Reflection:** Words of anguish, of seeking, an experience of emptiness and pain. For Mary and Joseph, Jesus was their absolute, the Gift of God entrusted to them. Their whole life centered on Jesus. Now he was lost, even more, he had deliberately separated from them. Mary's words are anxious. And why not? This is a sad night. Our souls suffer like this when God seems to be absent. Why God? Is it my fault?

And so they searched for him: “we have been looking for you”. It lasted three days, which was significant, for the third day always leads to resurrection.

This attitude of seeking is an example for all of us. God must be sought; God hides so that we might seek him; God is silent so that we might call out to him; God disguises himself so that we might discover him. This seeking readies us for an encounter with God. Seeking is done through faith and it purifies this faith. Seeking is done with hope and it strengthens this hope.

## TIME OF SILENCE

### SIXTH WORDS:

*“When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” (Jn 2:3)*

Music

**Reflection:** These words demonstrate the fundamental dimension of a mother: to watch over and intercede for her children’s needs. Mary knows how to be attentive and close at hand. She immediately notices the problem, is not self-absorbed or unaware. And facing the problem, she acts responsibly. She does not say: “that’s their problem”. Responsibility always comes forth from merciful love. Mary does her part to find a solution to the problem of this married couple. She is not content to just feel their pain and offer her condolences. Her response is a prayer, a request, almost a mandate. She cannot help them, but she goes to her Son, as she always does. And she will always be close to those most in need.

Mary will spend all eternity saying to her son:

*They have no wine, they have no faith,  
they don’t have the Spirit, they don’t have love,  
they have no joy, they have no dignity,  
they don’t have good health, they don’t have a job,  
they have no life.*

Our supplies of wine are scarce. We have more than enough water and vinegar. So many families lack love, so many persons lack hope, so many groups lack drive, so many nations lack peace and justice, so many churches lack the Spirit...For the wine of Cana is, as we already know, the Holy Spirit, the Love of God.

## TIME OF SILENCE

### SEVENTH WORDS:

*“His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” (Jn 2:5)*

Music

**Reflection:** This is like the spiritual testament of Mary. The essence of what she is asking us is that instead of doing our own will, or her will, we should do her Son’s will, which is the will of God.

This intervention from Mary is a “stroke of grace”. The hour of the Messiah appears, for this is what she has believed in. This will bring forth new wine, the abundant joy of the Kingdom, the beginning of Messianic times, the law transformed into grace, the letter into spirit and the Spirit will pour forth without measure.

Do whatever He tells you. Pay attention only to Him. If we do whatever he tells us our lives will be endless celebration. If we feed on his word we will have no more hunger or thirst.

His word is the Gospel. It contains many beautiful words of Jesus. The essence of what he tells us is to “love one another as he has loved us”, to live in his love, even though this means that we must die. But to

die is to live, since love is stronger than death. In short, what He tells us is that God loves us, because God is our Father. May we be open to this love and live this Love, the true wine of the Spirit.

## **TIME OF SILENCE**

No adoréis a nadie más que a Él (Sung three times).  
(translation: He alone we adore)

## **SILENCE**

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL:**

1. For the Church, so that purified of all evil and sin, it might be like Mary, holy and immaculate. Let us pray to the Lord.
2. For persons living in poverty, for those who suffer and mourn, that they may be consoled through the solidarity of others. Let us pray to the Lord.
3. For victims of violence and injustice, that they might be set free of their sufferings. Let us pray to the Lord.
4. That children and young people might grow in faith and love and be able to resist the temptations of the world. Let us pray to the Lord.
5. For women who are marginalized and exploited, that their dignity and rights might be restored. Let us pray to the Lord.
6. For nations that suffer from war, that they might attain peace. Let us pray to the Lord.
7. For all of us, that we might imitate Mary in our efforts to bring an end to evil, and that we might grow in holiness, truth and justice. Let us pray to the Lord.
8. For young people, that they never grow tired of striving to lead their peoples and nations. Let us pray to the Lord.
9. So that with Mary as our model, we might be able to go out of ourselves in solidarity with those most abandoned in our world, as she *set out* into the hill country to help her cousin Elizabeth. Let us pray to the Lord.
10. That our Association of the Miraculous Medal will generously commit to putting into practice more and more each day these words of Mary, in real efforts at evangelization and service. Let us pray to the Lord.

*Hear our prayer, O Heavenly Father, and bless all your children, that all might come to know your love.*

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Your Word, Lord, guides us in our life as Christians. In following Mary's example, we are led to you and to our brothers and sisters. Help us to avoid all that may lead us to sin, so that we might grow in love more and more each day. We ask this Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **SALVE REGINA**