



MARCH 25, 2020 – ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD PATRONAL FEAST OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY

Dear Family,

For this day when we celebrate our common Marianist vocation, the Alliance Mariale invites you to meditate on a particular aspect of our identity and our mission:

To make Mary known, loved, and honored

☉ Father Chaminade left us with rich teachings and orientations that are always relevant for our spiritual family. Among these is the invitation to implement a **Marian apostolate**. What we have discovered and what we are experiencing with the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, is like a treasure that we have to share: this is one of our specific missions within the Church.

"We are committed to publishing the name of Mary and to having her honored everywhere"
Father Chaminade (1819 retreat, 2nd meditation) "

"Our spirit is one of zeal, zeal for the glory of God through the knowledge and love of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (*Marian Writings II*, no. 263).

☉ To know Mary is to better understand her place in the plan of salvation willed by God, who filled her with so many graces, and also to better understand her role in our Christian life. Vatican Council II also commits us to this (in *Chapter 8 of Lumen Gentium on the Blessed Virgin Mary*) Following the study of Sacred Scripture, the Holy Fathers, the doctors and liturgy of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's magisterium, let them rightly illustrate the duties and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which always look to Christ, the source of all truth, sanctity and piety (L. G., ch. VIII, n ° 67).

☉ To love and honor Mary, let us enter in praise!
"Sing a new song to the Lord, praise him in the assembly of his faithful!" Ps 149:1.
We can pray with the "Litany of Loreto" (probably composed in the 12th century, approved by decree in 1587 by Pope Sixtus V). These praises to Mary alternate admiring contemplation and suppliant confidence. With the name of Mary are associated titles whose origins are biblical or in the spiritual tradition, by which we invoke Mary...





LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (Litany of Loreto)

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, one God.

Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of the Church,
Mother of divine grace,
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,

Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of Prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of Martyrs,
Queen of Confessors,
Queen of Virgins,
Queen of all Saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of families
Queen of peace.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, forgive us, Lord.

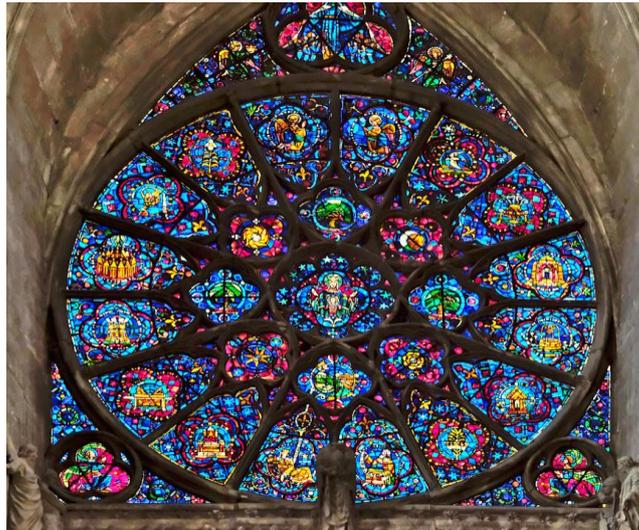
Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, hear us, Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

Pray for us, Holy Mother of God.
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

PRAYER

We beg you to grant us,
Lord our God,
enjoy continuous health of soul and body,
and by the glorious intercession
of the blessed ever-virgin Mary,
to see us free from the sorrows of the
present life
and enjoy the eternal joys.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Cathedral of Rheims, FRANCE - Rosette "The Litany of the Virgin"

☉ One of Mary's titles in this litany is: **Faithful Virgin.**

For our Blessed Founder, the greatness of Mary, beyond the eminence of her dignity, is found "... in the perfect fidelity with which she corresponded to her exalted calling. No doubt it is a signal glory for Mary to have been so highly privileged, and yet the glory she has merited by her fidelity is nonetheless distinctive". That fidelity is the work of grace ... "but not so completely . . . as to exclude the cooperation of Mary with the Spirit of God that dwells within her. Now it is precisely in this that Mary's greatest glory consists." *Father Chaminade (Marian Writings II, no. 516)*

☉ *Let us ask the Lord for this grace of fidelity to our Marianist vocation.*

"But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart." (*Luke 2:19*)

"But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in a good and honest heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance." (*Luke, 8:15*)

(We can prolong the meditation with the text of John Paul II attached: "*Virgo fidelis*")

VIRGO FIDELIS

Among the many titles bestowed on the Virgin throughout the centuries by the filial love of Christians, there is one that has a very deep meaning: *Virgo Fidelis*, the faithful Virgin. What does this faithfulness of Mary's mean? What are the dimension of this faithfulness?

The first dimension is called search.

Mary was faithful first of all when she began, lovingly, to seek the deep sense of God's plan in her and for the world. "*Quomodo fiet?*"—How shall this be?—she asked the Angel of the Annunciation. Already in the Old Testament the meaning of this search is portrayed in an expression of outstanding beauty and extraordinary spiritual content: "To seek the face of the Lord". There will not be faithfulness if it is not rooted in this ardent, patient, and generous search; if there is not in man's heart a question to which only God gives an answer, or rather, to which only God is the answer.



The second dimension of faithfulness is called reception, acceptance.

The "*quomodo fiet?*" is changed, on Mary's lips, to a "*fiat*". Let it be done, I am ready, I accept: this is the crucial moment of faithfulness, the moment in which man perceives that he will never completely understand the "how"; that there are in God's plan more areas of mystery than of clarity; that, however he may try, he will never succeed in understanding it completely. It is then that man accepts the mystery, gives it a place in his heart, just as "Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Lk 2:19; cf. Lk 3:15). It is the moment when man abandons himself to the mystery, not with the resignation of one who capitulates before an enigma or an absurdity, but rather with the availability of one who opens up to be inhabited by something—by Someone!—greater than his own heart. This acceptance takes place, in short, through faith, which is the adherence of the whole being to the mystery that is revealed.

The third dimension of faithfulness is consistency.

To live in accordance with what one believes. To adapt one's own life to the object of one's adherence. To accept misunderstandings, persecutions, rather than a break 'between what one practices and what one believes: this is consistency. Here is, perhaps, the deepest core of faithfulness. But all faithfulness must pass the most exacting test: that of duration.

Therefore **the fourth dimension of faithfulness is constancy.**

It is easy to be consistent for a day or two. It is difficult and important to be consistent for one's whole life. It is easy to be consistent in the hour of enthusiasm, it is difficult to be so in the hour of tribulation. And only a consistency that lasts throughout the whole of life, can be called faithfulness. Mary's "*fiat*" in the Annunciation finds its fullness in the silent "*fiat*" that she repeats at the foot of the Cross. To be faithful means not betraying in the darkness what one has accepted in public.

John Paul II, homily in Mexico City, Mexico, January 26, 1979

☉ Let us conclude our prayer with some intentions:

- giving thanks for our Marianist vocation in the Church
- giving thanks for the Alliance Mariale, recognized as a secular institute and for the thirty members who professed their perpetual vows in this institute in February, in the various countries.
- asking the Lord for new vocations in our spiritual family.