



MARCH 25, 2026
ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD
PATRONAL FEAST
OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY

Mary, Way of Hope

We have just lived a Jubilee Year marked by hope and joy. It was a time of grace, openness and renewal for each and every one of us. This ordinary jubilee invited the faithful to a spiritual journey of conversion, to reconnect with their faith. "Pilgrims of Hope", the walk continues in order to be bearers of hope in a moving world in search of meaning. In this context, we marked the 25th anniversary of the beatification of our Founder: Blessed Father Chaminade, an opportunity to celebrate the legacy of this great Servant of God and to draw on his example to strengthen our hope.

"Pilgrims of hope," we are and remain so. We are called to bear witness to the hope that comes from the Risen Christ. The Jubilee is over, but hope does not deceive. The road travelled continues. Our Patronal Feast is an opportunity for us, the Marianist Family, to take Mary, so that she might help us to "gather the flowers of hope." The theme that will guide our day is the following: **"Mary, Way of Hope."**

As every year, the Marianist family commemorates its vocation to give thanks and celebrate the joy of giving. To keep in mind such generosity of the Lord, let us follow in the footsteps of Mary: in whom **"hope finds its greatest witness"** (*Spes non confundit*, N° 24). Let the *Magnificat* burst forth in our hearts. Let us express our joy and gratitude to God for the wonders He has done in each of our lives and in our families. Let us sing this canticle of Mary with her, so that she may imprint in us the mark of her own full and active hope.

CANTICLE OF MARY (Lk 1:47-55)

My soul exalts the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior!

He overshadowed his humble servant;
henceforth, all ages will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done wonders for me;
Holy is his name!

His love extends from age to age over those who fear him;
Deploying the strength of his arm, he scatters the proud.

He overthrows the mighty from their thrones, he exalts the humble.
He fills the hungry with good things, sends the rich away empty-handed.

He raises up Israel, his servant, he remembers his love,
Of the promise made to our fathers, in favor of Abraham and his race, forever.

Mary's "Yes," a Path of Hope

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a model of vocation for all Christians. Her "Yes" to God, expressed at the Annunciation, is an example of faith, obedience and trust that inspires and guides believers of all times.

Faith is not a treasure to be guarded, but Good News to be shared.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a symbol of hope for the whole world. Her "Yes" to God, expressed at the Annunciation, opened a path of hope for all humanity.

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin maiden, given in marriage to a man of the house of David, named Joseph; and the maiden's name was Mary. (Lk 1:26-27). The Annunciation is a call. God always takes the initiative. The divine footsteps cross the footsteps of humanity to dwell with us.

Mary receives the Word of God to bring it to the world. Like her, we are invited to welcome this Word and to transmit it. ***"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you are going to conceive and bear a son; you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and he will be called the Son of the Most High" (Lk 1:30, 33).***

Her "yes" to God's plan of salvation, realized through the Incarnation, is the surrender of her whole life to God. It is the "yes" of full trust and total availability to God's will: ***"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38).***

Mary's yes to the Annunciation shows that God intervenes in the history of salvation, it is a message of hope. God is Love and this love is addressed to us as a call. He is waiting for our yes so that Jesus, the Savior, might bring hope and light to the world. The Lord visits his people with Mary's yes! His path is love. It is a path that is traced by the positive response given by Mary. It is a path that connects heaven and earth: ***"the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end" (Lk 1:32).*** The Incarnation is the materialization of hope. An incredible act of love.

Mary's "yes" opens a new era in the history of salvation, a new creation; the one we want to restore through our ecological commitment. Mary, the "new Eve" as the way of hope, calls us to work for reconciliation with God.

The Annunciation: an Opening to Hope!

Mary's "yes" marks the beginning of the Incarnation. Mary didn't understand everything but: ***"How is this going to be done since I don't know a man?" (Lk 1:34).*** She said "yes" in faith. It is this faith that is being asked of us today. The faith that makes the Word of God, once

sown, bear fruit in its time. The Annunciation reminds us that it is God himself who takes the initiative.

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, he who is to be born will be holy, he will be called the Son of God" (Lk 1:35).

Mary's "Fiat" transforms the humble house of "her" life into the God's House, becoming the "Tabernacle of the Most Holy Jesus"; it is with good reason that the *Litany of Loreto* designates it under the name of "Precious Tabernacle!"

God chose to incarnate among the people of Israel. Today, the Marianist Family desires to walk in hope with Mary.

Through our baptism, we too are called to become witnesses of Hope. It is now that our pilgrimage in hope begins. Our response, as Mary's family, finds its response in the light that the text of the Annunciation brings. We are called to renew our missionary commitment. The world thirsts for hope, meaning, salvation, restoration, dignity, freedom. Christ is this hope.

Through our lives, our words and our deeds, we are called to bear witness to the living presence of God in our world and in human history. ***"Be always ready to give an account of the hope that is in you" (1 Pet 3:15).*** Our family is rich in diversity, we have much to give, because we receive much from the Virgin Mary who accompanies us on this journey and who never ceases to say to us: ***"Do whatever He tells you."***

She teaches us to welcome the Word of God, to let ourselves be transformed by it, and to bring it to the world with trust, humility and simplicity: ***"For nothing is impossible with God."***

Mary's response to the Angel is a path of hope for all. "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). Her yes is that of hope, openness to the Holy Spirit. A yes of availability that listens and welcomes.

Mary's yes commits her to a path of trust

and obedience. It leads us on the same path; by letting her yes strengthen ours and make it more credible.

This sung refrain "Pure Source, Virgin Mary, with you hope is reborn" sums up the essence of today's message. When we say yes to God like Mary, we open the door to hope in our lives, in our families, in the church, in the world and in the mission. Isn't opening the door a great mission? This requires us to be aware of our responsibility. Mary's yes is a model for our own response to God. When we say yes to God, as Mary did, we join her path of faith and obedience. She said yes because she believed God's Word. She says yes, because she loves her God. The yes that brings down the Son of God into us.

Hope in Motion

Mary's yes is an impetus that pushes her towards others. It is a mission that is not kept to oneself, but is shared with joy. A mission that overflows with joy, good news to announce. In short, a joy that is given. Mary, a woman of hope on the move, hurried to her cousin's house. (Luke 1:39-45)

The hope she carries is to be given to the world. After the visit of the Angel, the Son of God who takes flesh in her is not private property, she sets out for the "Mountains of Judea." Hope makes us walk, ascend and reach the other. It grows wings and zeal. Elisabeth shares this

joy. "She is the first, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to recognize and proclaim the divine motherhood of Mary, calling her 'the mother of my Lord' (v. 43)."

"Mary's eagerness invites us to the urgency of charity in our pastoral service." As a Marianist family, let us allow ourselves to be challenged by the joy and eagerness of our Mother so that: ***"Our devotion prolongs on earth the maternal charity of Mary."***

Mary's hope impels her to act, to move, to be present to others; an active hope. As a Marianist Family, to what extent does our hope, in the image of Mary's, turn us towards others, the young, the poor, the voiceless, refugees...?

Mary's Yes is a yes that welcomes Jesus and presents him in the Temple. (Lk 2:22-38). We are called to welcome Christ and to present him to the world in order to keep the flame of hope alive.

Thanks to a "Here I am", a sign of availability, trusting in the action of the Spirit; God has entered history. Even today, God makes history in the lives of those who have said and will continue to say their "Here I am."

With Mary, on the way, let us be a source of hope

To be a source is to let something beautiful, good, peaceful spring up in oneself, it is to share what makes us live with others. Mary is a source of hope for us, hence our mission to make her "known, loved and served."

She is the one who keeps nothing to herself, she always presents it to her Son. As Marianists, this is our mission: "They have no more wine!" Mary, by her yes, invites us to be bearers of joy as at the wedding at Cana. To be a source of hope is to fill the "Jars" for new wine, good wine; that of a personal relationship with the Lord, of compassion, healing and presence. To listen to the Word of God and to give a positive response to God's call. As a family, let us look to Mary, who radiates trust and love for God and with her, to become dynamic men and women, ready to respond to the calls that come to us from the environments in which we live. These calls are to work for peace, to care for creation... The beautiful path of hope that Mary shows us is a path of joy, of a benevolent gaze, of a word, of a smile, of a presence, of an outstretched hand, of listening.

Mary's Hope is the fruit of her unshakeable faith in the divine promise. Our ability to be a source of hope for others depends directly on the strength of our own faith in the fulfillment of the Lord's Words. It is an active faith, which impels us to love and to restore dignity to others.

May Mary sustain our yes and make us: "docile to the action of the Holy Spirit," available for hope to bear fruit through our lives. May our yes become a spring that flows without drying up.

To be a source of hope is also to try to reproduce Mary's dispositions.

It is a question of trusting and entrusting oneself to God, certain that nothing is impossible for Him. God does not force freedom, but educates to freedom, so that everyone can say his own "Here I am."

To accept to enter into God's time, into his rhythms. Go deep. Believing in hope requires a "yes," which is not simply a passage in time, but the time of God, that is, the opportune time, the time of grace. ***"Behold, in her old age, Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has also conceived a son, and is in her sixth month, when she was called the barren woman."***

May the Lord, through his Blessed Mother, raise up many vocations in our Spiritual family.

Prayer Intention for the Marianist Family in each of its branches

- 1- Mary's Hope is the fruit of her unshakeable faith in the divine promise.
Let us pray to the Lord that lay communities may bear witness through the faith of their members in this world in need of hope, that it is possible to believe in Christian hope and, above all, to be a sign and bearer of hope to all those who are going through trials.
- 2- Mary's hope impels her to act, to move, to be present to others; an active hope.
Let us pray for young people, that the pastoral care with and for them in which the Society of Mary has been committed since its last General Chapter with great determination might arouse many vocations to the consecrated, matrimonial and priestly life for the Church and for our charismatic family, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3- We are called to welcome Christ and to present him to the world in order to keep the flame of hope alive.
For the Daughters of Mary, who, in order to respond to the calls of the Church, want to be Missionaries of Mary at the service of life, so that they can bear witness to Christ in their daily life with the mission of making Mary known, loved and served, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4- Bearers or Sowers of Hope in the footsteps of Mary, this is the invitation addressed to us on this day of the patronal feast of the entire Marianist Family. In order that the members of the Alliance Mariale may be an ever-growing presence of the chaste, poor and obedient Christ in all dimensions of societal life, let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer for Vocations for our Family

Lord, we thank you for your call to life, to friendship with you, to holiness.

Make us men and women "who appropriate the fragility of others, who do not allow a society of exclusion to emerge but who make themselves close" (*Fratelli tutti*).

Give our world the priests it needs, witnesses of your word and presence in the sacraments, passionate about the Gospel and at the service of their brothers and sisters.

Give the world the consecrated men and women (men and women religious, consecrated lay persons, etc.) who, in prayer and commitment, will be able to be actors in a transformation of society in love.

Give us the witness of love of lay communities trusting in your presence and strengthened in their commitment. Grant to all branches to build a united, missionary, faith-minded Marianist family, attentive to the needs of others.

Grant that each one of us may live to the fullest your call to holiness, and transmit the joy of the Gospel to the heart of the world. Amen

Our Lady of Hope, pray for us



Icon of Our Lady of Hope **Reference** IC_9137 or G9137
Author Yolande Denneulin (XXIst century)