

The unfolding of the program

Welcome: Greetings. News. Sharing of what has been lived since the last meeting with reference to the theme in different activities of your life.

1. Proclamation of the theme:

The association to which I want to belong is that of the Franciscan Missionaries **of Mary**. During this meeting we will reflect on Mary who is the *way within the way*.

We will search in the Gospel, who Mary is and what she teaches us. Mary of the Passion has given her a great place in her spirituality.

2. A call to the experience of this theme :

- Who is Mary for you?
- Do you remember an event where Mary was especially present in your life? Would you like to talk about it...?
- What word (or name) do you like to use when you address her?

3. What do our witnesses say :

In the **Holy Scriptures:** Lk 1:26-39

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. The girl’s name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, *“Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”* Mary was deeply troubled by

the angel’s message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, *“Don’t be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob for ever; his kingdom will never end!”* Mary said to the angel, *“I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?”* The angel answered, *“The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God’s power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six month pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do.”* “ *I am the Lord’s servant,*” said Mary; *“May it happen to me as you have said.”* And the angel left her.

“Standing close to Jesus’ cross were his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, *“He is your son.”* Then he said to the disciple, *“She is your mother.”* From that time, the disciple took her to live in his home. Jn 19:25-27.

Francis :

“Towards the Mother of Jesus he was filled with an inexpressible love, because it was she who made the Lord of Majesty our brother. He sang special praises to her, poured out prayers to her, offered her his affections, so many and so great that the tongue of men cannot recount them. But what delights us most, he made her the advocate of the Order and placed under her wings the

sons he was about to leave, that she might cherish them and protect them to the end.

(Thomas Celano’s *Second life* #198, p.521. St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources

It is said of Francis that he venerated in Mary the woman that the Father willed as the mother of his Son. Mary is the Woman, the New Eve, the Queen, Our Lady, but she is also the woman full of grace and in whom dwells all good... She is the Servant who pronounces a Fiat that she will never forsake.

As for **Mary of the Passion**, she contemplates Mary as she is presented in the Gospel at different moments of her life. At Nazareth she sees Mary as a woman of faith and interior life and at the same time as a woman of action. At the annunciation, she sees the profound significance of her gift of self, without looking back or compromise; in the visitation she contemplates Mary as the first missionary “who carries Our Lord, to the world”. At Cana, she recognizes a sensitive Virgin attentive and welcoming others. At the foot of the Cross, Mary of the Passion contemplates Mary as a woman who bravely stood in the midst of suffering. At the cenacle, she sees in Mary the mother of the new born Church. It is not surprising that she insisted on the attitude of Mary and chose the Marian Way for herself and for all her daughters.

4. Reactions to these various passages:

- What do these different passages evoke in you?
- After these reflections how do you visualize Mary?

- ❑ Do you see her as Francis saw her or as Mary of the Passion saw her? Or do you have your own view of Mary?
- ❑ Are you inspired to follow her example? In what way?

5. Practical applications for everyday life:

- In everyday life what will you do to walk in Mary's footsteps?
- In your own life try to identify some personal annunciations and visitations you have experienced? Can your response and attitude be improved?
- What place should Mary occupy in your life as afmm?
- What are you ready to do in order to let the life of grace and the wisdom of Jesus grow in your life as Mary did?
- Recite slowly a Hail Mary while thinking of what you are saying. You can repeat this experience every day.

Here take time to verbalize or write a practical application of what you have decided to do during this reflection on Mary, a way within the way.

6. Salutation of the Blessed Virgin

Hail, holy Lady, most holy Queen,
 Mary, Mother of God, ever Virgin;
 chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven,
 consecrated by him,
 with his most holy beloved Son
 and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.
 On you descended and in you still remains all
 the fullness of grace and every good.
 Hail, his Palace. Hail, his Tabernacle.
 Hail, his Robe. Hail, his Handmaid.
 Hail, his Mother. And hail, all holy Virtues,
 who, by the grace and inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
 are poured into the hearts of the faithful
 so that, faithless no longer,
 they may be made faithful servants of God through you.
 (Francis of Assisi)

Your 'yes' as large as your life

Virgin of Nazareth, the "Yes" that you pronounced in your youth marked your existence and became as great as your life itself.

Mother of Jesus, in your "yes", free and joyful, and in your vibrant faith many generations and many educators found inspiration and strength to welcome the word of God and to accomplish his will.

Giver of life, teach the youth to say "Yes" that gives meaning to their lives and make them discover the hidden God in the heart of every person.

Queen of the apostles, give us educators filled with wisdom who will love the youth and make them grow by guiding them to find the truth which brings liberation and happiness. (John Paul 11)

Marian Way



Mary, way within the way

Basic Formation.

Leaflet 5
 END or BEGINNING...