

October 7th: The Virgin of the Rosary

Gospel text (Lk 1,26-38): In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, «Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you». Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean. But the angel said, «Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob for--ever and his reign shall have no end».

Then Mary said to the angel, «How can this be if I am a virgin?». And the angel said to her, «The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible». Then Mary said, «I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said». And the angel left her.

«You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
(Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, well into the so-called "month of the Rosary", we celebrate the Virgin under

the advocacy of the Rosary. What better way to honor our Mother than to pray the Rosary? So many times has She appeared with the "rosary in her hands"! She likes it! Why? The reason is this: although it may seem that the prayer of the Rosary is a manifestation of Marian piety (of course, it is!), however its substantiation is Christological, Jesus himself. Put it simply: the protagonist of the Holy Rosary is Jesus Christ, the Son of God born of Mary Most Holy.

In fact, the different mysteries of the Rosary -joyful, sorrowful, glorious and luminous - are like "photographs" of emblematic moments in the life of Jesus as seen with Mary's eyes. For example: today we contemplate the Annunciation by the Archangel Saint Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. The dialogue between the divine messenger and Mary is very important; more important is her "yes" ("May your word to me is fulfilled": Lk 1:38). But here the very decisive thing is the Incarnation of the Son of God. The protagonist is Jesus Christ; Mary acts as an instrument (along with Her "yes", she offers her mother's womb).

If we go up the second joyful mystery, the Visitation of Mary to her cousin St. Elizabeth may again seem that the protagonist of the scene is St. Mary, having as co-protagonist Elizabeth. But, actually, it is not like that: the protagonist - as always - is Jesus (with barely a few days of human existence) and the co-protagonist is John the Baptist (also in his mother's womb, already six months). The two are instrumental to the first prophetic act of the New Testament: John points out to the Messiah already present in this world.

And so the prayer of this devotion takes place: the mysteries are mysteries of Christ. With good reason, Blessed Pope Paul VI said of the Rosary that "it is a compendium of the Gospel." In addition, to the "Hail Mary" - repeated around each one of these mysteries – it contains in its very heart the name of Jesus. Mary is blessed among all women because the fruit of her womb is blessed: Jesus!