April 27th: Memorial of Our Lady of Montserrat, Catalonia's patron saint

Gospel text (*Lk* 1,39-47): Mary set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, «You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!». And Mary said: «My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit exults in God my savior!».

«Mary set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth»

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Today, in the solemnity of Our Lady of Montserrat, the liturgy proclaims the Visitation Gospel. The Virgin Mary does not hide her feelings or the Mystery which God has made her depositary of. She lives it profoundly, as nobody ever has, and precisely out of a heartful need to serve and help she feels like going to visit her relative, and not only to contemplate the gift that God has treated her with. In the Visitation, Mary is the bearer of the Messianic salvation. She is the bearer as a servant. And her presence brings along Christ that gives the Spirit and, therefore, joy and praise.

«Mary set out for a town in the Hills of Judah» (Lk 1:39). All the pilgrims that set out for our mountain of Montserrat are also going to visit the Virgin Mary. They bring along their joys and their hopes, their pains and sorrows, their longings and the jubilations of their lives, their families, their parish or the community where they live their own faith. Pilgrimage is like a life metaphor. We leave our home, we set forth —quite often with effort and abnegation—, but we keep marching on with joy and decision for we know that, at the end of our journey, Someone is waiting for us.

And, thus, when arriving to Montserrat, before the venerable image of the Virgin Mary, the pilgrim realizes that, in fact, it is the Virgin Mary who is visiting him. Mary comes out to meet us from the bottom of our heart. She "decidedly" comes to visit us to bring us her Son Jesus Christ, to announce us the Good News that God has loved us so much that He has given us his own Son to redeem us from sin and death. Mary brings Christ with her and tells us «Do whatever He tells you» (Jn 2:5). We have also got to be "a-visiting" those we find in our way through life.