



Harvest of Prayer Holy Hour for Vocations

“Mary’s Humility: The Knock at the Heart of Christ”

Composed by Msgr. Charles M. Mangan
(For private use)

Opening Prayer

Lord God, grant to Your people health of soul and body. Through the intercession of Mary Most Holy, may we grow in Your likeness and increase in the humility that marked her life. Convinced of Your greatness and our lowliness, we ask for many vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. May You be praised in the raising up of these new servants for Your Kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading from Sacred Scripture (*Luke 1:39-56*)

During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

And Mary said: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For He has looked upon His handmaid’s lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear Him. He has shown might with His arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry He has filled with good things; the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped Israel His servant, remembering His mercy, according to His promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to His descendants forever.”

Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

After a period of silent prayer:

Intercessions

Entrusting ourselves to the Living God as we seek laborers for His Kingdom, we pray:

R. Lord, save us.

Grant new life to our young people as they discern Your call. *R. Lord, save us.*

Encourage parents to be receptive to Your invitation to holiness presented to their children.
R. Lord, save us.

Enlighten all pastors and pastoral workers to build up fresh vocations in Your Church.
R. Lord, save us.

Embrace all those who doubt Your love for them and the existence of their vocation.
R. Lord, save us.

After a period of silent prayer:

Reading from Pope Benedict XI's Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation

Sacramentum Caritatis (no. 33)

In Mary most holy, we also see perfectly fulfilled the “sacramental” way that God comes down to meet His creatures and involves them in His saving work. From the Annunciation to Pentecost, Mary of Nazareth appears as someone whose freedom is completely open to God’s will. Her immaculate conception is revealed precisely in her unconditional docility to God’s word. Obedient faith in response to God’s work shapes her life at every moment. A virgin attentive to God’s word, she lives in complete harmony with His will; she treasures in her heart the words that come to her from God and, piecing them together like a mosaic, she learns to understand them more deeply (cf. Lk 2:19, 51); Mary is the great believer who places herself confidently in God’s hands, abandoning herself to His will. This mystery deepens as she becomes completely involved in the redemptive mission of Jesus. In the words of the Second Vatican Council, “the blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son until she stood at the Cross, in keeping with the divine plan (cf. Jn 19:25), suffering deeply with her only-begotten Son, associating herself with His sacrifice in her mother’s heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of the victim who was born of her. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus, dying on the Cross, as a mother to His disciple, with these words: ‘Woman, behold your Son.’” From the Annunciation to the Cross, Mary is the one who received the Word, made flesh within her and then silenced in death. It is she, lastly, who took into her arms the lifeless body of the one who truly loved His own “to the end” (Jn 13:1).

After a period of silent prayer:

Meditation

Our Blessed Mother is many things for our era. But one of her greatest contributions is that her example teaches us the correct relationship between freedom and obedience. She was most free, most liberated, when she obeyed God—and that was always! Never was there a moment in her existence when she denied God something that He desired. Therefore, she was always completely free.

Whether at Cana, Calvary or the Cenacle, Our Lady spoke no other word but “yes.” She delighted in doing the Lord’s will. Her collaboration with Christ was boundless. Mary even cooperated with Him in redeeming the human race through His salvific death on the Cross.

Mary received the Word Incarnate—the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity made flesh—in her chaste womb. We conceive Jesus in our souls and bring Him forth through our obedience to His commands.

More than ever, the Church requires young men and women to serve Christ as His humble friends after the example of Mary. We need many of these youth as our future priests and consecrated persons.

With the humble and obedient Ever-Virgin of Nazareth as their inspiration, these budding vocations are in good hands.

After a period of silent prayer:

Litany of Humility (composed by Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val)

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, *R. Hear me.*

From the desire of being esteemed, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being loved, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being extolled, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being honored, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being praised, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being preferred to others, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being consulted, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being approved, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being humiliated, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being despised, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of suffering rebukes, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being calumniated, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being forgotten, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being ridiculed, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being wronged, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being suspected, *R. Deliver me, Jesus.*

That others may be loved more than I, *R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That others may be esteemed more than I, *R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,
R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be chosen and I set aside, *R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That others may be praised and I unnoticed, *R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That others may be preferred to me in everything, *R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*

That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,
R. Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

O Mary, my Mother, how greatly I love you, and yet, how little is my love! You teach me everything I need to know, because you teach me what Jesus is for me, and what I ought to be for Jesus.

The Lord's Prayer

Now offer together the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:

Our Father...

After a brief period of silence, the Holy Hour for Vocations concludes:

Closing Prayer

We turn to you, Lord, in trust! Son of God, sent by the Father to the men and women of every time and of every part of the earth! We call upon You through Mary, Your Mother and ours: may the Church not lack in vocations, especially those dedicated in a special way to Your Kingdom.

Jesus, only Savior of mankind! We pray to You for our brothers and sisters who have answered "yes" to Your call to the priesthood, to the consecrated life and to the missions. May their lives be renewed day by day, to become a living Gospel.

Merciful and holy Lord, continue to send new laborers into the harvest of Your Kingdom! Assist those whom You call to follow You in our day; contemplating Your face, may they respond with joy to the wondrous mission that You entrust to them for the good of Your People and of all men and women.

You who are God and live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.
Amen.

(Prayer from Pope John Paul II's Message for 2004 World Day of Prayer for Vocations)