

CALLED TO GIVE LIFE

Emperatriz Arrobo ss.cc
General Superior

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°6 – MAY 20TH 2013

WOMEN WHO GENERATE LIFE



The month of May has arrived full of important moments that feed and nourish our life of faith: The great Feast of Pentecost when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit, a silent but active protagonist in the history of salvation, who fills all, penetrates all, invades all, the inner teacher, the teacher of the heart. The feast of our brother Damien, faithful follower of Jesus who gave his life to the end. A month dedicated to Mary, a woman of faith who knew how to make her life a continuous Fiat.

Remembering these three celebrations in a contemplative and prayerful way, allows us to enter into a dynamic of faith, renewed and accompanied by the faithfulness of Mary and Damien to the Plan of God. As disciples of Jesus we are called to be at the service of the action of the Spirit, so that this wonderful inner transformation can take place and will make us "new creatures" (2 Cor.5, 17). Our mission is simply to support gently the promptings of the Spirit and to be at the service of an unending Pentecost for every human being who proclaims the gospel (Acts 19:6).

**Our mission is simply to
support gently the
promptings of the Spirit**

In this letter I want to share with you a few snippets of the experience of the Spirit in the life of Mary, in the light of the text of the Visitation (Lc.1, 39-46). At different times in our reflection as a General Government, we have talked about the need to find an icon that gives light to our life and mission and which inspires us from the current reality as Congregation; we finally realized that perhaps some of the texts that can enlighten us in this regard is the "meeting of Mary with Elizabeth". As you will recall, at another moment we said that the current face of the Congregation could be read in the light of this event, on the one hand a tired, elderly woman, without much

energy and on the other, a young woman with hope, joy and excitement, but the two engendering life and giving life in abundance.

Through the story of the Visitation, we breathe in the endearing and overflowing joy of two

Mary verifies what the angel said at the Annunciation, "with God nothing is impossible."

women full of life, a life that belongs to them, that has been given to them, a life that may not be perceived, but is there. It is in the encounter where this life is expressed, "the infant leaped for joy". In the icon that we have in front of us, we see the meeting of the old woman who despite her years feels that a new life is growing in her

womb and young woman who has just conceived. Elizabeth feels that the long-desired child jumps for joy in her womb and filled with joy loudly exclaims "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb". "Blessed are you who have believed...". Mary verifies what the angel said at the Annunciation, "with God nothing is impossible." The event generates life, acceptance, joy, communion, dialogue, confidence, service and all kinds of mutual help, it is not the visit of a doctor, it is a way of being that does not measure or calculate. Together they celebrate life, they dance, sing and pray, this creative attitude helps them generate life with hope and trust in a God who surprises and they allow themselves to be surprised.

Both are women of faith, deeply rooted in the poor of Yahweh. This faith enables them to receive the grace of life and feel the graciousness of God in her maternal womb. This faith fills them both, they need to share it with all human beings of good will.

The meeting of the two women, pregnant woman, with their songs of praise and thanksgiving, are a harmonious mystery of intense tenderness: it is the celebration of solidarity and fraternal support, sharing joys and blessedness, of cultivating friendship and intimacy between those who have special missions in the plan of salvation; with a little imagination we can approach them, their long hours of dialogue, mutual confidences, their supplications and prayers, their conversations about the ways in which the Lord is leading them and about the future that they can envision for themselves and for their children.

Mary and Elizabeth are a model for us, in our reality as a Congregation we experience this meeting of women who have given and continue to give much life despite the years and young women full of enthusiasm and vitality, both embarked on the same adventure to follow Jesus and to experience it in their being and doing, so that with Him to live the mission entrusted to our Sacred Hearts religious family "to be an expression and revelation of the Heart of God in the world".

Our chapter decisions say that "our charism has much to say to the world today" so we are called to go out of ourselves to reach out to those who need us, at both community level as well as pastoral level. As consecrated women are called to make visible this coming of God, to listen to and contemplate the presence of God in the other, God comes to each one and His coming cannot leave us the same, He wants to stay within us, "look I am at the door knocking..." (Rev. 3: 20), God comes to us and invites us to do the same, to go to our sisters, making our own the experience of St. Paul "I no longer live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal.2, 20).

"our charism has much to say to the world today"

It is very important that each day we become more awareness of this commitment as a gift of God and as our task, "what has been received freely, give freely" (Mt 10:8). If we have received a Life, a Faith and a Charism it is to give them in the same way, freely. The visit of Mary to Elizabeth

gives us the key to experiencing this giving, it is in the "encounter" which reveals clearly what we carry inside, that identifies, encourages, energizes and recreates.

It would be good to ask ourselves, in our interpersonal and community encounters What experience does this reveal? What or who do we talk about? Isabel's house is filled with love, joy and happiness in the presence of Mary; with the presence of each sister, with what are our communities filled? The presence of Mary in Elizabeth's house is full of the life that she was carrying within, the Word that takes her voice. With what is your presence in community charged? what are you carrying inside? Does the Word take your voice, your mind, your heart? In this meeting we can contemplate Mary with Elizabeth and the praise and blessings that are mutually expressed, driven by the life they carry within. Are our community encounters praise and blessing?

Are our community encounters praise and blessing?

Mary humbly received the words of greeting and blessing from Elizabeth. She does not deny the mystery, does not reject the power and the joy of grace. She does not hide what God has been doing in her life. Mary prays, she opens up to God, she allows herself to be surprised by the joy and the presence of divine grace, she responds by returning to God the glory and praise that Elizabeth has offered to her: "My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the humility of his handmaid "(Lk 1.47 to 48).

We are invited to be women who generate life just like the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, in docility to the Spirit who is the protagonist of the mission. Women who carry Jesus in their lives and with him engender a new way of living, a new way of serving. Women who become the Gospel, because they make the presence of God credible in their lives. Women of God who have been attracted to Jesus and his plan. Women who want to be witnesses of the free and unconditional love of God the Father - Mother. Women capable of giving life to the end. Women who are generous, loving, enterprising, who with their life and attitudes build a more humane world. Women who are tender, diligent, sensitive to recovering the maternal face of God. Prayerful and contemplative women who know how to discover the presence of God in their everyday lives. Women who share with their communities the bread of hope, peace, freedom, fraternity and solidarity. Women capable of giving life always and everywhere. Women who set out each day because the life of the other calls them and they commit themselves.

Women who are tender, diligent, sensitive to recovering the maternal face of God

Like Mary, we are called to embrace life, to make it grow and to surrender it, life that fills our hearts with joy and gladness. It is only from this joy and happiness that we can be life-giving and give life in abundance, a life that generates more life when you encounter life that is there within each of our Sisters. These united lives like John and Jesus are what makes it and will make it possible for God to continue doing great wonders in our Congregation. These small or great happiness and joys that are present in our hearts, are part of the new that God wants to see in the building the new face of the Congregation, it is only from the happiness and the joy that comes from our being women inhabited by God, strengthen in our hope in the good that the Lord wants to do in us and through us.

At this point in our personal, community and Congregational life let us welcome Mary who comes to visit us, who wants to share and influence us with their joy that comes from God who visits and lives within, this God also wants to stay with you and me if we are attentive to welcome him when he knocks our door, the door of the heart, the door of our faith, the door of our love. We discover a

God at work in the life and mission of our Congregation, filling it with meaning and revealing his true face.