



The Holy See

CONCLUSION OF THE MONTH OF MAY

WORDS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Grotto of Lourdes in the Vatican Gardens

Thursday, 31 May 2012

[[Video](#)]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am always delighted to take part in this Marian Vigil in the Vatican, a moment which, although in the presence of so many people, always retains its intimate, family character. The month which the devotion of the faithful dedicates in a special way to veneration of the Mother of God closes with the liturgical feast, recalled in the “second Joyful Mystery” of the Visit of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. This event is marked by the joy expressed in the words with which the Our Lady glorifies the Almighty for the great things he has done looking upon the humility of his handmaid: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour” (Lk 1:46). The *Magnificat* is the hymn of praise which rises from humanity redeemed by divine mercy, it rises from all the People of God; at the same time, it is a hymn that denounces the illusion of those who think they are lords of history and masters of their own destiny.

On the contrary Mary puts God at the centre of her life, she abandons herself trustingly to his will, in an attitude of humble obedience to his loving plan. Because of her docile spirit and humility of heart, she is chosen to be the temple which bears within it the Word, God made Man. She, therefore, is the symbol of the “Daughter of Zion” whom the prophet Zephaniah calls to rejoice, to exult with joy (cf. Zeph 3:14).

Dear friends, tonight let us turn our gaze to Mary with renewed filial affection. We must all learn from our heavenly Mother always: her faith invites us to look beyond appearances and to believe

firmly that daily struggles are making way to a spring that has already begun in the Risen Christ. Let us draw upon the Immaculate Heart of Mary this evening with renewed trust to allow ourselves to be caught up in her joy, which finds its deepest source in the Lord. Joy, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is a fundamental hallmark of the Christian: it is founded on hope in God, it draws strength from ceaseless prayer, and allows us to face tribulation with serenity. St Paul reminds us: "Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer" (Rom 12:12). These words of the Apostle are like an echo of Mary's *Magnificat* and exhort us to reproduce in ourselves, in our every day life, the feelings of joy in faith, which belong to Mary's canticle.

I would like to express to each and every one of you, dear brothers and sisters, Venerable Eminences, Bishops, priests, consecrated persons and all the faithful, the hope that this spiritual joy, which overflowed from the heart brimming with gratitude of the Mother of Christ and our Mother may be further strengthened, at the end of this month of May, in our souls, in our personal and family lives, in every environment, especially in the life of this family which here in the Vatican serves the universal Church. Thank you everyone