

Monday Week 9 of Ordinary Time: The Visitation of Our Blessed Lady

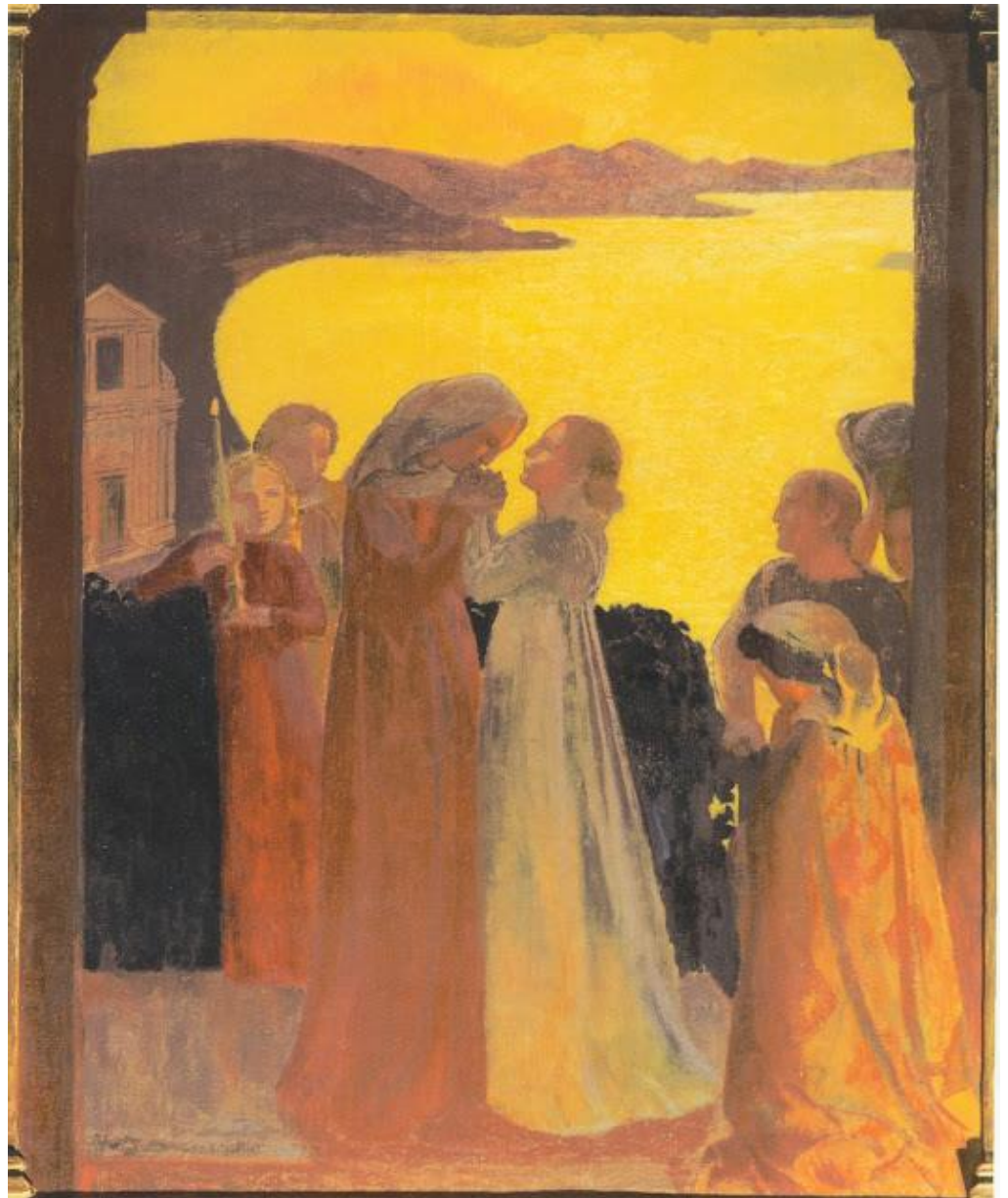
Gospel: Luke 1:39-56

May is the month of Mary, and our journey with her this month comes to an end with this wonderful feast of the Visitation.

On hearing that her elderly cousin is at long last expecting a child, Mary rushes to be at her side.

Yesterday in his homily, Fr. Naz reflected that as baptised people, that is, those who have received Our Lord Jesus Christ in Baptism and have become united who to Him, are commissioned to go out and take Christ

to the whole world (c.f. Mt. 28:19-20). We see here our Blessed Mother doing exactly that! Mary has received Christ in her womb at the Annunciation (c.f. Lk. 1:26-38) and immediately takes him to Elizabeth. This painting¹ is a beautiful illustration of the effects of Mary's action.



¹Maurice Denis: *Magnificat* accessed from <http://acatholicwomensplace.blogspot.com/2007/12/magnificat.html>

Elizabeth recognised that she was in the presence of her Lord as the child in her womb (St. John the Baptist) leaped in recognition of the presence of Jesus, God the Son. At this moment, John the Baptist was surely baptised himself, and filled with the Holy Spirit who was to inspire him to proclaim the coming of Christ at the river Jordan (c.f. Mt. chapter 3).

Look at the way the woman with her back to us is kneeling reverently before Mary. Because Mary carried Jesus in her womb, she is a tabernacle. The woman's posture reminds us that we too kneel or genuflect when we come into the church as we come into the presence of God in the tabernacle.

Look at the lake which has turned gold as the whole of creation rejoices in the presence of God on earth (in Mary's womb).

Look at how the girl is carrying the single candle, which reminds us our own baptismal candles which were lit when we were baptised and were united to Jesus Christ.

The artist has added an interesting feature. The church windows are dark... is this because everyone is "out there" proclaiming the Good News of salvation... or is it because the majority of the population don't regard the Church as relevant? In this painting, the whole of creation rejoices, and a small collection of people react. As Fr. Naz said yesterday, we need to go out and "baptise the world" – bring Christ to them. But this is only possible by the grace of the Holy Spirit received in sacramental Baptism and in Confirmation.

Let's pray the "Hail Mary", reflecting on the words of Elizabeth. As we do, may be our intention can be that we can bring Christ to someone who needs to hear the Good News of His salvation as He leads us to His Father in the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Hail Mary...."