

**Marianist World Day of Prayer**  
**Prayer Service**  
**11 October 2009**

**OPENING SONG:** “Hail Mary: Gentle Woman,” by Carey Landry (or other suitable song).

**OPENING PRAYER:** All read aloud together or in parts “Marianist Family,” by Jose Maria Arnaiz, SM (pp. 81-82 of The Marianist Family Prayer Book).

“Our Father, we pray for our Marianist Family  
with all its weaknesses and all its wealth.  
Look upon us with kindness;  
it is our mother and our family.

Give it your grace so that it may become  
what it longs to be.  
“A family that fosters life and enthusiasm,  
in which all can express what they think and feel,  
what they believe and desire;  
a community of freedom.

“A family in which all can pray in their own language,  
develop and cherish their own culture,  
appreciate the heritage and history in which they feel  
at home:  
an incarnational community, one that knows the  
paschal mystery  
and experience a new Pentecost.

“A family of which people will say:  
“See how they love one another,’  
rather than, “See how well organized they are’:  
a living and growing community.”

Marianist Family, you are small but growing,  
Fragile but full of hope,  
Hesitant but believing.  
Lift up your eyes and see:  
Jesus and Mary are always with you. Amen.”

## **FIRST READING:**

**Marianists today are gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace of Fatima in Kinshasa, located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**

**Our first reading is a short biography of Jacinto Marto of Fatima**



**JACINTA MARTO** was born on March 11, 1910. At the time of the apparitions in Fatima, she was seven years old. She was the youngest of the seers. During the apparitions she saw and heard everything, but spoke neither to the Angel nor to the Mother of God. Intelligent and very sensitive, she remained profoundly impressed when she heard the Blessed Virgin declare that Jesus was much offended by sin. After seeing the vision of hell, she decided to offer herself completely for the salvation of souls.

The night of the first appearance of Our Lady (May 13, 1917), it was Jacinta who, despite the promises she had made to Lucy, revealed the secret of the apparition to her mother:

"Mamma, today I have seen the Madonna in the Cova da Iria. Oh, what a beautiful Lady!"  
"If only I could place in the heart of everyone the fire which I have in my heart which makes me love the Heart of Mary so much!"

To free souls from the fires of hell, Jacinta freely undertook sacrifices. In the fierce heat of the summer, she gave up drinking water. As a sacrifice to God's Glory, she offered her afternoon snacks to children even poorer than she. To save souls, she took upon herself the pain of wearing a rough piece of knotted rope next to her bare skin. She endured the exhausting interrogations and insults of disbelievers all without the smallest lament. "If only I could show hell to sinners!" she said, "how happy I would be if all could go to paradise."

## **SECOND READING:**

Luke 1:39-45

### **The Visitation**

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 what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

## **REFLECTION/FAITH SHARING:**

Think about a time when you were welcomed by another, as Mary was welcomed by Elizabeth. Perhaps you had traveled far, as in a pilgrimage or maybe just a short distance. (short pause). Our Christian heritage is full of moments when people were welcomed – Here, in the story of the visitation, the woman at the well welcomed in faith by Jesus, the disciples as they began their ministry. The shrine of Our Lady of Peace of Fatima in Kinshasa, Congo has become the main center of pilgrimage for all the Christians of Kinshasa, pilgrims are welcomed, and invited “to implore with faith and great hope, the gift of peace for the world in general and the Congo in particular. Numerous Christians come to regain peace in their heart. Those who come regularly attest that, since they have been coming to the shrine, there has been a great change at work in their lives.

How can we be more mindful of the people of the world and continue to think of all as part of the Body of Christ?

In what ways has the Marianist Family brought more ‘peace to your heart?’

## **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

We pray today in unison with Marianists gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace of Fatima in the Democratic Republic of Congo

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer.**

(see prayer intentions from [www.marianist.org](http://www.marianist.org) World Day of Prayer document)

**CLOSING PRAYER:** “A Litany in Honor of Mary,” by Joseph Lackner, SM.

Holy Mary, pray for us.  
Mother of God, pray for us  
Mother of our redemption, pray for us  
Mother of a lost child...  
Mother of comfort and understanding...  
Mother who shares our joys...

Mother who endures our sorrows...  
Mother whose heart was pierced by a sword...  
Mother most merciful....

Woman responsive to God's word,  
Woman willing to believe the impossible,  
Woman who rejoices in her lowliness,  
Woman with an undivided heart,  
Woman of perfect freedom,  
Woman wrapped in mystery,  
Woman moved by the Spirit,  
Woman champion of the poor and lowly,  
Woman widowed by a husband's death,  
Woman at the cross,  
Woman patient and waiting,  
Woman clothed with the sun,

Queen of the fullness of times,  
Queen of beauty unalloyed,  
Queen of integrity,  
Queen of painful meetings,  
Queen of all our heart's treasure,  
Queen of our destiny,  
Queen of peace,

Mary you are mother and virgin, wife and widow, peasant and queen –blessed for all time. We need the comfort of your prayers. Remember us always to our God through your Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Lord forever and ever. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG:** “Magnificat” or other appropriate song.