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## "Men and women who are humble"

In considering the Gospel scene of the Visitation, Bishop Alvaro del Portillo writes: "Let us learn from our Lady. If we truly are eager for the divine Master to increase our faith, let us be humble."

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*In those days Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah (Lk 1:38). Mary has found her vocation, and promptly and surely follows the divine plans. She*

visits her cousin Saint Elizabeth and hears words of praise for her own faith: *Blessed are you that have believed* (Lk 1:45). Our Lady's faith has shown itself clearly in her perfect self-giving to God's plans, and this is why she is proclaimed blessed, happy. Fidelity is always based on *fides*, on faith, and only cracks when that faith is weakened. . . .

Saint Elizabeth greeted our Lady with the words, *blessed are you that have believed*, and our Mother attributes everything to God: *My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name* (Lk 1:46-49). The measure of Mary's faith is her immeasurable humility. Let us learn from our Lady. If we truly are eager for the divine Master

to increase our faith, let us be humble. Day after day, let us acknowledge our lowliness by our deeds, disappearing, treading underfoot even the tiniest rebellions of our ego, and then we will be able to be faithful . . . .

In order to fulfill God's will, our limitations are no obstacle, since our Lord has already taken them into account; it is enough to be humble, because *God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (1 Pet 5:5)*. If in any situation you don't think you have the strength or qualities needed, don't forget that God knows this, and he created you and called you—he loved you and loves you!—the way you are. *For consider your call, brethren, writes Saint Paul to the Corinthians, not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame*

*the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God (1 Cor 26:29).*

How clearly these words show us the positive side of our smallness, *so that no human being might boast*, so that none might think they have been called because of their virtues, or that the works of God succeed solely or principally through human means.

God allows us to experience our own weakness, the disproportion between our feebleness and the job he is asking of us, so that we may always go along our way as men and women who are humble, and place all our trust in Him (*Letter*, 19 March 1992, nos. 16-19).

# Life of Mary (VI): Visitation to Saint Elizabeth

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