

Day 4: October 16

Intercession: May pregnant and parenting moms find life-affirming help for themselves and their children through the Christian community.

Prayers: *Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

Reflection: In the Gospel account of the Visitation, Mary travels to the hill country “*in haste*” to visit her cousin Elizabeth (Lk 1:39). Despite being unexpectedly pregnant herself, Mary responds to the news of Elizabeth’s pregnancy with *urgency*, embarking on a journey that was probably difficult and spending the next three months at Elizabeth’s side.

Mary’s example invites us to become more aware of the needs of pregnant and parenting moms in our own communities. A woman with an unexpected pregnancy may have any number of fears and challenges: facing judgment from her friends and family, losing her job or housing, or being abandoned by the father of her child. The needs and challenges of single mothers can be immense, especially for women in poverty, and resources are often not apparent for those most in need of support. Mothers in difficult circumstances should see the Church as a place where they can turn for friendship, help, and support. Mary’s witness is an invitation to each of us to step up in love and compassion. It is a summons to *make haste* to help mothers who may be isolated and alone. We too can bear Christ within us and help others experience His presence. May we, the body of Christ, do all we can to provide mothers, children, and families with the support they need to flourish.

Acts of Reparation (*Choose one.*)

- Fast from television and social media today. Spend some time praying and reflecting on how God may be asking you to help build a culture of life in your home, workplace, or Church community.
- Offer this short “Prayer for Pregnant Mothers” for today’s intention. (This prayer is also available at walkingwithmoms.com/prayer-for-pregnant-mothers.)

O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers facing difficulties.

Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help

us become instruments of God’s love and compassion.

Mary, Mother of the Church, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, together with all people of good will, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life. Amen.

- Offer some other sacrifice, prayer, or act of penance that you feel called to do for today’s intention.

One Step Further: Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our communities, often alone without a network of support. As Catholics, we are called to lovingly support mothers in welcoming and caring for their children. Moms in need should see the Catholic Church as a place they can come for compassionate assistance and accompaniment on the journey of motherhood. Visit www.WalkingWithMoms.com to learn more about the Church’s efforts to increase support for mothers and their children through *Walking with Moms in Need*—and how *your* parish can participate.