

MAY IS FOR MARY

We celebrate Mary as the mother of Christ-of Life that overflows and saturates and renews the whole world- and we celebrate Mary as our own Blessed Mother- the mother of every single one of us, who envelopes us in her dynamic love and fervent protection. In May, we let ourselves become overwhelmed with admiration for our Mother, so that we might begin to imitate her. We imitate her so that we might love God more fully, more courageously. We strive to be passionate lovers of God so we might attain excellence in our love for each other. We strive in excellence, in love because this world needs it-and desperately. Our month of Marian devotion is our school of love and justice. We need only to sit at our Mothers feet and learn. Caitlin Kennell Kim (<http://busgtedhalo.com>)

As we flit through Spring, getting ready for summer, may we stop and find peace in the words of Mary as revealed at Laus: "Have patience....Do your duty cheerfully...Bear no hatred towards your enemy...do not be troubled and sick over it, if people do not profit from your advice...Do not be disturbed by temptations visible or invisible spirits or temporal affairs...Strive never to forsake the presence of God, for whoever has faith will not dare to offend Him."

THE MAGNIFICAT

+My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior. He looks on his servant in her lowliness; henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy is his name! His mercy is from age to age on those who fear him.

He puts forth his arm in strength and scatters the proud hearted.

He casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly.

His fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy, the mercy promised to our fathers, to Abraham and his sons forever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit' as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Mary was a woman of prayer. In her Magnificat (1Luke45-55), she reveals her that her soul magnifies the Lord and her spirit rejoices in God her Saviour.

You can be a person of prayer by setting aside quite time each day to restore your spirit.

MARY A MODEL DISCIPLE FOR ALL OF US Things to ponder as you think about Our Lady

Mary followed God's will. When the angel appeared, she submitted to what she understood was God's will for her. *You can surrender to God's will each morning by offering God everything that you think, do and say throughout the day.* She experienced stress. As a young woman, Mary endured the stress of an unexpected pregnancy, tension with her future husband, a difficult birth, a traumatic move to another country, and the horror of losing Jesus in Jerusalem, but she never lost her faith that God was with her. *You can deal with the stress in your life with the same belief that God will guide you through the darkness by giving you enough light for each step of your journey—no matter how stressful it may seem.*

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD-Liturgy of the Word

Prayer Space: Make sure that you have a focal point in the in the hall where you will gather. This a solemn service. Have quiet music playing as people enter to create a reflective atmosphere.

Prayer table: white cloth (check Liturgical calendar) a large pillar candle. A Bible (Book of Gospels), a simple wooden cross, Fresh flowers, Statue and Rosary.

Opening Song: Mary, Did You Know?

Let us begin with the sign of the Cross.

All: in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Prayer:

Today we celebrate and we honour Mary who followed the will of God all her life.

She said "Yes" to what God asked of her. May is a model of faith, for all of us.

ALL: We honour you, Mary, as Mother of God and our mother too. Amen.

First Reading: a reading from the book of Revelation to John 12:1,5

Then a great and mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a woman, whose dress was the sun and who had the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She gave birth to a son, who will rule over all nations and with an iron rod. The child was then taken to God and his throne. The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (1: 26-38)

Narrator: In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said,

Angel: Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!

Narrator: Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her,

Angel: Don't be afraid, Mary, God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the King of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!

Narrator: Mary said to the angel,

Mary: How, then this be?

Narrator: The angel answered,

Angel: The Holy Spirit will come on you and God's power will rest on you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, by she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing God cannot do.

Narrator: Mary said,

Mary: I am the Lord's servant, may it happen to me as you have said.

Narrator: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayers of the Faithful:

We ask Mary for her prayers that she may intercede with God for us.

R: Mary, Mother of God pray for us.

Mary was the Mother of Jesus. May we also bring Jesus into the world for others. R.

Mary lived a life pleasing to God. May we do God's will in all things. R.

Mary gave the glory to God through her life. May we give praise to God in all we do. R,

Mary was a holy person. May we strive to live as God created us. R.

Mary was a person of courage. May we do what we know is right. R

Song: Hail Mary, Gentle Woman

Activity: Give each person 2 circles (representing the beads of the Rosary). Ask them to write, Mother Mary; please help me pray for....

One at a time each one will come up to place beads around the statue of Mary.

Let us pray together the Hail Mary

All. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. And blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Closing Prayer:

Mary was always faithful to God's will. She was faithful at the stable in Bethlehem, she was faithful on the flight to Egypt, and she was faithful at the foot of the cross. We should follow her example and be faithful to God's will in our lives.

All: Father, help us to do our will even when it is difficult. Help us to be like Mary and respond YES to what He asks of us. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ and your Holy Spirit. Amen.

We end our liturgy of the word with the sign of the Cross.

All In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Song: Ave Maria (instrumental)

MARY, A ROLE MODEL FOR OUR TIMES

Mary, the mother of Christ, had a dynamic and profound influence on the early Church as she motivated the apostles, soothed them, comforted them and encouraged them to go out to the ends of the world preaching about the teaching of Jesus Christ.

THOUGHT TO PONDER

Our own mothers, who risked her life, bearing us and spent her time bearing with us, have the same qualities of our blessed mother.

Every one of us can make a comparison as to how our lives have changed. Years ago most of us had mothers who stayed home. Most of us, years ago, had the awareness that there was a stability and a security because mother was there. Today life is much more complicated for the average mother. The fact that so many families move so quickly that their time is quite fragmented, that they are trying to juggle a job outside and inside the home is a reminder of the tremendous tension and stress that mothers of today are under.

We can say the same of our blessed mother.

Today, we congratulate all the mothers, but there is a terrible burden being placed on them today. We know that many of the mothers of our generation have many of the qualities of our blessed mother. We also know from history that Mary by bringing these qualities into the lives of the apostles saved the Church. We say to all to the mothers this month, if you imitate Mary, the mother of God, by bringing those same qualities of charity and compassion into the lives of the immediate members of your family, you will do a tremendous amount of good not only for your family, but for your Church. If there is anything our society needs it is good mothers who can imitate what Mary did and bring those same qualities to the lives for the families that God has entrusted to your care.

Prayers and Blessings for Mothers

Rev Mark Connolly, Spirituality For Today