

OUR LADY OF VICTORY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION CHAPEL

Summer



Hail, Holy Queen enthroned above, O Maria!
Hail, Mother of mercy and of love, O Maria!
Triumph all ye cherubim! Sing with us ye seraphim!
Heaven and earth resound the hymn!
Salve, salve, salve, Regina!

ADORER NEWS

Save the Date: Holy Trinity Parish is hosting a “*Eucharistic Boost*” the weekend of October 14 & 15, 2023. Fr. Ricardo Pineda, CPM of the Fathers of Mercy will give two talks on Saturday and two on Sunday, as well as both mass homilies. The focus will be Eucharistic Adoration and devotion. The Fathers of Mercy is a Roman Catholic Congregation of priests whose primary apostolate is preaching parish missions and retreats, with an emphasis on the Holy Eucharist and Confession. Further details will follow as the date approaches.

Eucharistic Revival, Year 2: This June begins the second year of the USCCB’s 3-year long focus on the Blessed Sacrament. Spanish bishop **St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia** (d. 1940) is co-patron for this endeavor, along with St. Carlo Acutis. Fr. Garcia had undergone a kind of spiritual shock at the way the gift of the Eucharist is so sorely spurned by human hearts. In the lives of the saints, there is often one key moment of grace which thereafter directs the entire course of their spiritual life. For St. Manuel, it was the unforgettable experience of the abandoned tabernacle. If St. Manuel Garcia was so outraged by the indifferent attitude towards the Eucharist that he observed in the Church a hundred years ago, what would he say today? His words are a clarion call to priests—indeed, to all Christians—to arise from spiritual slumber and to draw near to the light of the Eucharistic Sun of Love. Perhaps his canonization in 2016 is heaven’s urgent invitation addressed to the whole Church to prostrate itself at the foot of the tabernacle.



Why, in this year of Eucharistic focus, do we devote this issue to the Blessed Virgin Mary? Simply because it is through her profound humility and purity that Jesus Christ could most fully and perfectly radiate His Real Presence. We come closest to her during our own reception of the Blessed Sacrament, when, returning to our pew, we carry as living tabernacles His Body within us, as she did. *“Mary is present, with the Church and as the Mother of the Church, at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist. If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of Mary and the Eucharist.”*

-St. Pope John Paul II, Ecclesia de Eucharistia

Behold Your Mother

“Who is she? Who is this Woman so close to God in truth that she surpasses the dignity of the order of heavenly angels? She is the only Mother who shone with the radiance of virginity, for she brought the Mighty One into the world.”
(Byzantine Office, Sunday Matins)



How shall I find my place in the long line of devoted servants of the Holy Virgin who have sung her praises for nearly two millennia? The mystery of Mary as virgin and mother, handmaid and queen, has captured the hearts and imaginations of mystics, artists, poets, and countless Christians ever since Divine Fire fell from heaven upon her and the other disciples in the upper room – and love for her is still a flame in the hearts of millions worldwide. If all generations are to call her blessed (Lk 1:48), then voices must rise in this present generation as well.

If we're going to approach the mystery, it is good that you know from the beginning what I mean by the term “mystery”. It is not something “mysterious” in the colloquial sense of perplexing or even spooky. The Greek *mysterion* is translated by the Latin *sacramentum*, so you can already get a feeling for its meaning. A mystery indicates something concerning the being or presence or activity of God, something that is partly revealed and partly hidden. So when we speak of the mystery of the Holy Trinity or the Transfiguration of Christ, or anything that refers to the marvelous works of God (the mystery of Our Lady is one of these) we're talking about something that God has revealed to the extent our limited minds can grasp it. It necessarily remains hidden because it is essentially beyond human comprehension or expression in human language.

Two thousand years ago, the Maiden of Nazareth was the “place” prepared by God for the beginning of the salvation of mankind. At the time, the womb of the Virgin was the place through which God came to us as a man. But ever since then, and until the end of time, she will be a “place” prepared by God *for us*. The place for us is not the womb of the Virgin but the heart of the Mother. If we remain within this spiritual

refuge, we have nothing to fear. Though Queen in heaven, Mary is Mother on earth. Not only once or twice does she come to help us recover from our self-inflicted wounds or brainless betrayals, but over and over again, whatever it takes to guide us back on the right path. St. Silouan of Athos once had a sobering experience of Our Lady's presence before his conversion and entry into the monastery. She came to him and said, "I find your ways ugly to look upon." A man of lesser strength and humility (like me) would have been utterly crushed at those words. Just think, you receive a once-in-a-lifetime visitation of the Mother of God, and that is what she says to you! But he found them to be the sweetest words he ever heard, because he knew the love that inspired them, and in response he changed his life and began to follow Christ with his whole heart.

Sometimes the Mother of God speaks to me. Now that doesn't mean I receive visions or locutions or anything like that, but when I'm praying – I have an icon of Our Lady of Vladimir in my cell, among others – sometimes in the wee hours of the morning with the candle flickering before her face she "speaks" to me. She doesn't really speak of herself. She always speaks from the word of God. Our Lady never has said anything to me like "You're such a nice boy!" or similar things. Usually, it is just the opposite. But she speaks the word of God.

On one occasion I was very distracted in prayer. I had many things on my mind, problems I should deal with during the day and other things. So I just looked up at her and said, how did *you* do it? She was always recollected and walked in the grace of God, and despite whatever troubles she had, she could pray. Our Lady answers like Jesus often did, kind of cryptically, but you get the message. The question was only halfway out of my head when suddenly she said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be." That really is not a direct answer, but it is the right answer. Now certainly all these worries of mine were not treasures- just the opposite – but the point is that whatever we give our time to, that is our treasure. This is especially so if we take our time away from prayer and relationship to God to worry about other things, for then we are placing them on a higher priority than our prayer.

Then there was another thing she said. I don't remember what the context was exactly. It was a temptation or trial or something I was going through and I didn't even have the strength to ask anything. I just looked up toward her sad eyes looking down from the icon, and what did she say

to me – “Oh, there, there; everything will be alright”? No. What she said was, quoting from the Epistle to the Hebrews: “You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood” (12:14).

We tend to think that our own problems are so great and so terrible that we have to draw everyone’s pity and attention to coddle us in our misery. Mary has to lift us up out of that self-pity and self-absorption because she has the vision, the universal vision, and she sees the saints and the martyrs suffering great things all over the world. And here we are with some little tiny problem, so we go to her crying. She says: all right, but listen, you have a long way to go yet, because you haven’t even begun to follow your Lord who was crucified and who suffered and bore the weight of the entire world. Our Lady speaks like that because she wants not only to instruct us according to the Gospel but to strengthen us, to build us up to carry our cross and hence find salvation. That is her job, and one reason God has sent her.



The proper hymn for the feast of Our Lady’s Dormition (Assumption) says in part, “In your Dormition you did not forsake the world.” It means she didn’t just die and leave us orphans. When we celebrate her heavenly glorification, it is not her going away but her being given to us by God. Now that she is released from her earthly limitations, that universal power of intercession and presence is with all those who will call upon her for help. We call upon her in a special way in the Office of the *Paraklisis*, the Office of supplication to the Mother of God. *Paraklisis*, from *para kaleo*, refers to the one you call to your side as a friend or advocate. That is why the term *Paraclete*, another name for the Holy Spirit, comes from the same word. The Mother of God, as St. Maximilian Kolbe said, is the chief instrument of the Holy Spirit, and so she shares in that vocation of the Paraclete.

Another point to keep in mind: Our Lady does not twist the Lord’s arm or change his mind. She does only what is his will. She is the great Mother of God and Queen of Heaven and Earth, and her voice makes the heavens shake, so she will not tolerate our pettiness, our infidelities, our

rationalizations, or anything that will endanger our salvation. She has no time for self-pity, either, since she knows that the stakes are high and we are called to a mature and dedicated life of discipleship. Her great concern is the salvation of the souls of her children, many of whom are being lost.

In the course of his work at Fatima, Fr. Thomas McGlynn had several long interviews with Sr. Lucia, the last living witness of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima. Our Lady showed the three children a vision of hell. That vision was not for their instruction and warning, but for ours. As Fr. McGlynn pointed out, “All the bleeding, dying, and despair of a thousand wars cannot equal the disaster of a single soul being damned. We miss the spiritual meaning of things if we think Our Lady came to Fatima to tell us how to keep out of a third world war, or how to convert Russia, or how to achieve tranquility in our earthly existence. She came to tell us how to keep out of hell.”

Lest there be any misconception about the place of devotion to Mary in Catholic piety, we honor in a special way the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of Jesus, i.e. the person of Mary in her eminent sanctity and glorification by God, because it is the wish of her Son. Jesus knows well that true devotion to His Mother leads souls to Him. As Pope Paul VI wrote, “Everything in Mary leads us towards her Son, our only Savior... The Church sees Mary then, not as the *goal*, but as the *guide* – to her Son, especially to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.”

There have been times, many years ago, when I did not understand Mary’s place in God’s plan or the Church or in my own life. But it has been shown to me recently that my mission in life has been somehow guarded by my heavenly Mother, so much so that even my own sin and stupidity have not been sufficient to derail the divine plan. This is how I learned that. I was reading a story of a man who was a cocaine addict (among other things) and went through a lot of hell but finally was rescued by Our Lady, who evidently had been praying for him all along. It was a good story, but I wasn’t particularly moved or feeling emotional. Then I came to a line, a simple comment made to him by Sr. Elvira, the head of the drug rehab center (a place for spiritual conversion as well): “Our Lady has protected you your whole life.” The words were like pure arrows from heaven directly into my heart, and I just broke down crying. It was totally unexpected. When things happen so suddenly and strongly, I know the source is outside of me.

I still didn't know, however, why she would have followed me my whole life. Many things came to mind that made me ashamed of what I put her through. I realized with sudden clarity that so many events, so many potentially dangerous situations that easily could have gone terribly wrong but didn't, so many false paths I either could have taken but didn't, or did take but got off before it was too late - all this was because the Mother of God was protecting me and I wasn't even aware of it. It was a profound moment of grace, of spiritual awareness, and of tears of gratitude.

At that time I had on my bookshelf a little picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe next to a picture of the face of Jesus from the shroud of Turin. I asked her, "Why did you do all this for me?" Then I looked at His picture and seemed to hear her say: "For *his* sake." The Lord foresaw my whole life, and all the evil and foolish things I would do, so he sent his beloved Mother after me to guard and protect me, and little by little to lead me back.

We ask Our Lady to pray for us at the hour of death, for it is the most critical hour of our whole life. The state of our soul at that hour will determine our eternal destiny. If you lose Heaven, you lose everything – absolutely *everything*. Knowing our defects and weaknesses, how feeble we are in our efforts to please God, and how inadequate our preparation for the Kingdom of God is, we turn to Our Mother: "Pray for us, now and at the hour of our death." It is said that the Catholic Church is the hardest to live in. But it is the very best to *die* in! There is no one I'd rather have praying at my bedside than my heavenly Mother. She will stay with us to the end, urging us to repentance, calling us to peace and calming our fears and speaking to us of the Kingdom of Heaven.



– Excerpted from "A Place Prepared by God: Through the Virgin Mary, the New Eve, Paradise Will Not Fail Twice". Abbot Joseph Homick.



A POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

MOST holy Lady, Mother of God, light of my darkened soul, my hope, my protection, my comfort and my joy. I am thankful that you enabled me, unworthy as I am, to become a partaker of the most pure Body and precious Blood of your Son. You bore the true Light; give light to the spiritual eyes of my heart. You who gave birth to the Fount of immortality: give life to me, made dead by sin. Kindhearted Mother of the merciful God, have mercy on me, and give me compunction, contrition of heart, and humility of mind. Recall me from the distraction of my thoughts. Enable me to receive without condemnation and to my last breath the most pure and sanctifying Mysteries for the healing of my soul and body. Grant me tears of repentance and thanksgiving, so that I may sing and praise you all the days of my life, for you are blessed and glorified forever. Amen.