



SAINT THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee."

SPECIAL ISSUE!

MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray. O God, Father of mercies, whose Only Begotten Son, as He hung upon the Cross, chose the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, to also be our Mother, the Mother of the Church.

Grant, we pray, that with her loving help, your Church may be more fruitful day by day and, exulting in the holiness of her children, may draw to her embrace all the families of the peoples.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

**-St. Pope Paul VI
(November 21, 1964,
at the Second Vatican Council)**

MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

On November 21, 1964, at the closing of the third session of the Second Vatican Council, the then-Pope, St. Paul VI, dedicated the prayer printed on the front of this bulletin to *“the honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”* Afterwards, he renewed the Consecration of the Church to Mary, as the “Mother of the Church” — first made by Pope Pius XII in 1952. In his 1987 encyclical, *Redemptoris Mater*, and at a general audience on September 17, 1997, St. John Paul II reiterated the title “Mary, Mother of the Church.” On Wednesday, May 1, 2020, Archbishop Jose Gomez, as President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, re-consecrated

the United States to Mary, Mother of the Church, along with his brother bishops. Below is an excerpt of the speech of St. Paul VI from November 1964:



“Meditating on the close relationship between Mary and the Church, for the glory of the Virgin Mary and for our own consolation, **we proclaim the Most Blessed Mary to be the “Mother of the Church,”** that is to say, of all the people of God, of the faithful, as well as of the pastors, who call her their most loving Mother. And we wish that the Mother of God should be still more honored and invoked by the entire Christian people by this most sweet title.

“This is a title, venerable brothers, not new to Christian piety; it is precisely by this title, in preference to all others, that the faithful and the Church address Mary. It truly is part of the genuine substance of devotion to Mary, finding its justification in the very dignity of the Mother of the Word Incarnate. Just as, in fact, the divine maternity is the basis for her special relationship with Christ, and for her presence in the economy of salvation brought about by Jesus Christ, thus it also constitutes the principal basis for the relation between Mary and the Church, since she is the Mother of Him who, right from the time of His Incarnation in her virginal womb, joined to Himself, as Head, His Mystical Body, which is the Church. Mary, then, as Mother of Christ, is Mother also of all the faithful and of all the pastors.

“It is, therefore, with a soul full of trust and filial love that we raise our glance to her, despite our unworthiness and weakness. She, who has given us Jesus, the Fountainhead of Grace, will not fail to succor the Church, now flourishing through the abundance of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And our trust is even more lively and fully corroborated if we consider the very close links between this Heavenly Mother of ours and mankind. Although adorned by God with the riches of admirable prerogatives, to make her a worthy Mother of the Word Incarnate, she is nevertheless very close to us.

“Daughter of Adam, like ourselves, and therefore our sister through ties of nature, she is, however, the creature who was preserved from original sin in view of the merits of the Savior, and who possesses, besides the privileges obtained, the personal virtue of a total and exemplary faith, thus deserving the evangelical praise, *beata quae credidisti* (blessed art thou who believed). In her earthly life, she realized the perfect image of the disciple of Christ, reflected every virtue, and incarnated the evangelical beatitudes proclaimed by Christ. Therefore, in her, the entire Church, in its incomparable variety of life and of work, attains the most authentic form of the perfect imitation of Christ.”

May we remember that our lives must be anchored to the Mystery of the Cross, to the oblation of Christ in the Eucharist, and to the Mother of God, the Mother of the Redeemer and the Mother of the Redeemed, the Virgin who makes her offering to God.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Fundamentalist Christians are sometimes horrified when the Virgin Mary is referred to as the “Mother of God.” However, their reaction often rests upon a misunderstanding not only of what this particular title of Mary signifies, but also of who Jesus is—and of what their own theological forebears, the Protestant Reformers, had to say regarding this doctrine. A woman is a man’s mother either if she carried him in her womb or if she was the woman contributing half of his genetic matter or both. Mary was the Mother of Jesus in both of these senses, because she not only carried Jesus in her womb but also supplied all of the genetic matter for His human body, since it was through her—not Joseph—that Jesus “was descended from David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3). Since Mary is Jesus’ mother, it must be concluded that she is also the Mother of God: If Mary is the mother of Jesus, and if Jesus is God, then Mary is the Mother of God. There is no way out of this logical syllogism.



Although Mary is the Mother of God, she is not His mother in the sense that she is older than God or the source of her Son’s divinity, for she is neither. Rather, we say that she is the Mother of God in the sense that she carried in her womb a divine person—Jesus Christ, God “in the flesh” (2 John 7, cf. John 1:14)—and in the sense that she contributed the genetic matter to the human form God took in Jesus Christ. To avoid this conclusion, Fundamentalists often assert that Mary did not carry God in her womb, but only carried Christ’s *human* nature. This assertion reinvents a heresy from the fifth century known as Nestorianism (named after the theologian **Nestorius**, Patriarch of Constantinople from **428 to 431**). **This heresy was refuted by the Council of Ephesus in 431, at which a dogma was developed that concluded that Mary was the Mother of God. A mother does not merely carry the human *nature* of her child in her womb; she carries the *person* of her child. Women do not give birth to human natures; they give birth to *persons*. Mary thus carried and gave birth to the *Person* of Jesus Christ, and the *Person* she gave birth to was God.**

The Nestorian claim that Mary did not give birth to the unified *Person* of Jesus Christ attempts to separate Christ’s human nature from His divine nature, creating two *separate and distinct* persons—one divine and one human—united in a loose affiliation. It is, therefore, a Christological heresy, which even the Protestant Reformers recognized (both Martin Luther and John Calvin insisted on Mary’s divine maternity). In fact, it even appears that Nestorius himself may not have believed the heresy named after him. Since denying that Mary is God’s Mother implies doubt about Jesus’ divinity, it is clear why Christians (until recent times) have been unanimous in proclaiming Mary as Mother of God. The Church Fathers agreed, of course, and the following passages witness to their lively recognition of the sacred truth and great gift of divine maternity that was bestowed upon Mary.

- **Cyril of Jerusalem:** “The Father bears witness from Heaven to His Son. The Holy Spirit bears witness, coming down bodily in the form of a dove. The archangel Gabriel bears witness, bringing the good tidings to Mary. The Virgin Mother of God bears witness” (*Lectures* 10:19 [A.D. 350]).
- **Ephraim the Syrian:** “Though still a virgin she carried a child in her womb, and the handmaid and work of his wisdom became the Mother of God” (*Songs of Praise* 1:20 [A.D. 351]).
- **Athanasius:** “The Word begotten of the Father from on high, inexpressibly, inexplicably, incomprehensibly, and eternally, is He that is born in time here below of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God” (*The Incarnation of the Word of God* 8 [A.D. 365]).
- **Epiphanius of Salamis:** “Being perfect at the side of the Father and incarnate among us, not in appearance but in truth, God the Son reshaped man to perfection in Himself from Mary, the Mother of God, through the Holy Spirit” (*The Man Well-Anchored* 75 [A.D. 374]).
- **Ambrose of Milan:** “The first thing which kindles ardor in learning is the greatness of the teacher. What is greater than the Mother of God? What more glorious than she whom Glory Himself chose?” (*The Virgins* 2:2[7] [A.D. 377]).
- **Gregory of Nazianz:** “If anyone does not agree that holy Mary is Mother of God, he is at odds with the Godhead” (*Letter to Cledonius the Priest* 101 [A.D. 382]).
- **Cyril of Alexandria:** “I have been amazed that some are utterly in doubt as to whether or not the holy Virgin is able to be called the Mother of God. For if our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how should the holy Virgin who bore Him not be the Mother of God?” (*Letter to the Monks of Egypt* 1 [A.D. 427]).

MARY, EXTERMINATRIX OF ALL HERESIES



“Most Holy and Ever-Virgin Mary, Exterminatrix of All Heresies, pray for us and protect the Church from all error.”

Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, for you alone have destroyed all heresies. You believed the word of the Archangel Gabriel. A virgin, you brought forth the God-man; you bore a Child, O Virgin, and remained a Virgin still. Mother of God, intercede for us (taken from the Traditional Roman Mass).

In this image, notice how the Blessed Mother is beating down a demon with a club and protecting a little one from his poisonous lies. This imagery derives from the book of Revelation: “The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth...to sweep her away with the flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and opened its mouth, swallowing the river. Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus” (Rev. 12:15-17).

The Serpent (Satan) spews out a flood of water, which are his many lies. This is the tactic he tried with Eve—spewing forth the lies which vanquished her. He tried the same strategy with the Blessed Mother but was not successful as she was perfectly graced by Christ. Angry, he then turns his attention to “the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments and bear testimony to Jesus.”

We are those who try to “keep the commands of God and bear testimony to Jesus.” Satan is trying to damn us through the lies he spews from his mouth. Once baptized, he tries to catch us through heresy. Yet, Mary’s maternal protection stays with us. Consequently, she is called the *Exterminatrix of All Heresies* because she stands in enmity against Satan.

In *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, Pope Pius X invokes the Blessed Virgin Mary by the title, “*Exterminatrix of All Heresies*”. He took this curious appellation for the gentle maiden of Nazareth from the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The title had particular meaning in *Pascendi* (written in 1911 against modernism), the “synthesis of all heresies.” Faced with that crisis, it was proper to appeal to the *Exterminatrix*. But *how* does she destroy heresies? Mary never preached a sermon against error, never conducted an inquisition, never excommunicated anyone. She never (God forbid!) presented a paper at a theological conference. Well, look first at the zeal she inspires. It’s a mark of the defenders of the faith that they have a devotion—often disarmingly childlike—to our Lady. From St. Irenaeus, writing against the heresies in the 2nd century, to St. Dominic, preaching against the Albigensians in the 12th century, to St. John Paul II, teaching against modern errors in our own time, devotion to Mary has always been something of a calling card for the Faith’s defenders. The Church has, time and again, been delivered from darkness and error because the faithful cried out to her in need. But most of all she is the *Exterminatrix of All Heresies* by virtue of who she *is*. It is the truth of who she is—or, rather, the truth of what God has done for her—that vanquishes heresies.

Today we see another dimension of Mary as the *Exterminatrix of All Heresies*: she defends the truth about the human person. By her Assumption, she reveals and destroys the error that plagues us now: the error about the human body. Today’s heresy (seen most of all in the new Gnosticism of gender ideology) is a recapitulation of an ancient, recurring error. Rather than knowing man to be an embodied soul, he is seen as a soul that happens to have (or be trapped in) a body. The body becomes a plaything, a tool, a possession, a curse, etc. Indulge it while you are healthy, and discard it when you are not. In this heresy, the body means nothing and tells you nothing about yourself. Again, this is a perennial error precisely because all of us experience the disintegration of body and soul to some degree. By the sin of Adam and Eve, we lost original integrity, including that perfect union of body and soul God intended. Our souls do not always get along so well with “Brother Ass.” The difference now is that this discomfort has been raised to the level of an ideology imposed by cultural and governmental strongmen.

Mary, assumed into heaven, reveals the truth and upends the errors. All saints are in heaven spiritually but await the last day when their bodies will be reunited with their souls. Our Lady, however, already enjoys perfect blessedness in the fullness of her human nature. In her very being she teaches the essential union of body and soul. Her Assumption has to be understood as one with her entire life. By her Immaculate Conception, Mary is kept free from original sin and its effects. She does not suffer the opposition of body and soul that the rest of us do. In that singular grace granted to the New Eve in her Assumption, we have a reminder of what we were created to be and a proclamation of what God’s grace can accomplish. We see that God created us as a body/soul unity. Man’s body and soul are one, and a society designed around their opposition is contrary to His good. Further, the grace of Christ reconciles us with God and also with ourselves. Let us appeal to Mary as we strive to live that integrity of body and soul in our own lives—and as we also likewise struggle against the confusions of our culture and the assaults of our government.

MARY, MODEL OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERHOOD

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is decidedly the greatest of all mothers. Motherhood has always been a sacred and noble vocation, but Mary raised it to an even greater stature when she became the Mother of God. As she who is “blessed among women” (Luke 1:42), Mary gives us the clearest and most inspiring picture of what the ideal mother should look like, and every Christian mother would be wise to take her cues from one who excelled at motherhood like none other.

Mary was “full of grace,” or put more simply, God lived within her. This came naturally because of her upbringing. St. Ann was Mary’s mother and she taught her young daughter to be loving and kind, attentive to God’s Word, and obedient to God’s will. With such a firm foundation, Mary was so favorably disposed to God that when the archangel Gabriel appeared to her and said, “*You will bear a Son...*”, with deep faith she trustingly replied, “*Let it be done unto me, according to your word*” (Luke 1:31,38). Every Christian mother loves God with all her heart and responds favorably whenever God calls.

Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35); it was by the grace of God that she conceived. Every conception is a miracle, and every Christian mother knows she is a partner with God in the ongoing work of creation, deeply aware that her child is a gift from God. As a result, when a Christian woman is blessed with a pregnancy, she rejoices in her child as Mary rejoiced in Jesus. She completes her pregnancy rather than ending it in an abortion, and cares for her unborn child with good nutrition, medical check-ups, and the avoidance of smoking, alcohol, or any drugs that could have a harmful effect.

Once Mary became pregnant, she immediately went to visit Elizabeth, her relative, who also was pregnant (Luke 1:39-45). Christian mothers do not focus solely on themselves and their own families. Instead, they have the marvelous ability to assist relatives and friends who are in need. Not long after Mary became pregnant, she offered a magnificent prayer to God, one of the most beautiful prayers in all of Scripture, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). Mothers who follow Mary’s example are deeply prayerful and speak to God from their hearts day-by-day.

On what would become the first Christmas, Mary gave birth to her Son Jesus, and she immediately wrapped Him in swaddling clothes (Luke 2:7) and cared for His physical needs. Christian mothers care for their children’s physical needs by feeding them, clothing them, changing their diapers, rocking them to sleep, taking them to doctor’s appointments, and nursing them through illness. Several weeks after Jesus was born, Mary, along with her husband Joseph, presented their newborn Son Jesus to the priest in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38). By doing this, Mary consecrated Jesus to God, acknowledged that God had a plan for her Son, and agreed to do everything in her power to cooperate with God’s intended purpose for Him. Likewise, Christian mothers consecrate their children to God in the Sacrament of Baptism, and promise to do everything possible to help their children do what God wants in their lives.

Next, King Herod tried to kill Jesus, so Mary fled to Egypt to protect her Son (Mt 2:13-15). Christian mothers keep their children away from evil forces that could harm them: violent or abusive adults, undisciplined playmates, and bad television programs, to name a few. Mary and Joseph took their Son Jesus to the synagogue in Nazareth each week in observance of the Sabbath (Luke 4:16), and they took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem once a year for Passover (Luke 2:41). For Mary, regular church attendance was automatic. Mothers who follow Mary’s example go to Mass each week, taking their children with them, because it is so important to pray with others and be connected to other faith-filled families.

The Gospel says that Jesus was obedient to Mary (Luke 2:51), which implies that Mary was firm and demanding with her Son. Christian mothers do not let their children do whatever they want, but have high standards for Christian conduct, and have a set of house rules which they insist upon being obeyed. When Jesus was crucified, Mary stood at the foot of the Cross and suffered with Him (John 19:25). She never abandoned her child, even during adulthood, particularly when things were at their worst. This sort of enduring love is exemplary for Christian mothers. Children get into trouble when they’re young and sometimes when they’re already adults. Mothers like Mary stand with their children throughout life, especially when things go bad, even if they are unable to alter the course of tragic events, to offer love and support in whatever way they can.



CELEBRATING THE MASS "AD ORIENTEM"

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

If you have been joining us for our daily live streamed Masses on Facebook, you will have noticed that, except during the Mass readings and the homily, the priests are now facing the altar—just as those in the congregation do (or *would* do if they were allowed be there!). This is called, “*Ad Orientem*,” which means, “to the East”. To better understand our reasons for doing this, we are sharing with you excerpts from an article written by **Nicholas LaBanca**.

Worshipping towards the East is something that goes back to the beginning of the Church. “*Celebration of Mass ad orientem*,” says Bishop James Wall (bishop of the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico), “*is not a form of antiquarianism, i.e., choosing to do something just because it is old, but rather choosing to do something that has always been.*” We must be clear here that facing *ad orientem* during Mass does not entail a wholesale return to the Tridentine Latin Mass (the “Extraordinary Form”). Such a posture of prayer can certainly take place in the Ordinary Form of the Mass in the Latin Rite as well. As Pope Francis said in September 2019, “*To be modern, some believe that it is necessary to break away from the roots. And this is their ruin, because the roots, the tradition, are the guarantee of the future.*”

As for the historical context of *ad orientem* worship, Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI writes in his book, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*: “*A common turning to the East during the Eucharistic Prayer remains essential. This is not a case of something accidental, but of what is essential. Looking at the priest has no importance. What matters is looking together at the Lord. It is not a question of dialogue, but of common worship, of setting off towards the One who is to come. What corresponds with the reality of what is happening is not a closed circle, but the common movement forward expressed in a common direction for prayer.*”

Many critics of *ad orientem* worship will pejoratively state that, “*the priest has his back to the congregation!*”. This completely misses the point. We are praying **together**, toward the Lord who comes. Think of how it works during Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, at which the priest faces the same direction as the people during the Divine Praises. Again, no priest’s “back is to you” any more than the back of the person in the pew directly in front of you is to you. *Ad orientem* worship is not something just for Eastern Catholics, but for ALL Catholics. This common orientation helps us to turn our focus back to God. Facing toward the East during Mass is one of those holy traditions filled with deep meaning and significance. St. Augustine says, “**When we rise to pray, we turn East, where heaven begins. And we do this not because God is there, as if He had moved away from the other directions on earth, but rather to help us remember to turn our minds towards a higher order, that is, to God.**”

(To read the **uncondensed article**, go to this website: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2019/10/04/the-case-for-ad-orientem/>).



Mass Intentions

May 9 through May 16, 2020

Saturday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Carmelite Community
- Noon: 1) Kuo-Shang, Yu-Mei, and Tai-Seng, RIP
- 2) John Wrotniewski, B-day INT
- 3) Donna Spencer, INT

Sunday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Magdalena Gomez, RIP
- 11:00 a.m.: 1) Martita Lopez, INT
- 2) Soledad Castellanes, RIP
- 3) Evengeline Holman, RIP
- 4) Gilberto Gomez, RIP; 5) Parishioners

Monday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Sr. Cecelia, OCD INT
- Noon: 1) Mother's Day Novena 1
- 2) Daisy Torres, RIP

Tuesday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Gabriel Anyanwu & Family, INT
- Noon: 1) Alex & Lauren Cheah, INT
- 2) Mother's Day Novena 2

Wednesday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Mother's Day Novena 3
- Noon: 1) Gabriel Anyanwu & Family, INT
- 2) Hermine Tittmann, RIP

Thursday:

- *7:30 a.m.: John Okamoto, RIP
- Noon: 1) Mother's Day Novena 4
- 2) Fr. Matthias Lambrecht, OCD, INT

Friday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Sr. Cecelia, OCD, INT
- Noon: 1) Ariel Aclaro, INT
- 2) Mother's Day Novena 5

Saturday:

- *7:30 a.m.: Carmelite Community
- Noon: 1) Mother's Day Novena 6
- 2) Mark & Wieslaw Adamowicz, RIP
- 3) Eulogio Diaz, RIP

*All Masses, including the Masses at the Cloistered Nuns' Chapel, are CLOSED to the public during the Coronavirus Lockdown.

NOTICE RE MASS INTENTIONS:

Rest assured that, although Mass is currently not being celebrated publicly, the Carmelite Fathers are celebrating private Masses for all the above Mass intentions. When Mass is concelebrated, each priest offers the Mass for a separate intention. Thus you see that each of the Masses offered in the church has more than one Mass intention (one for each priest present).

Outside the Parish

Happy Mother's Day to All Mothers in our Parish and All Who Are like Mothers!



We hope that whatever you do at home today, you will be blessed!



MOTHER'S DAY NOVENA OF MASSES SEND US THE NAMES OF YOUR MOTHERS!

The Carmelite Friars will be celebrating a Novena of Masses for mothers from **THIS MONDAY, May 11 through Tuesday, May 19.**

Because of the pandemic, we **CANNOT PROVIDE MOTHER'S DAY CARDS**; however, you may send in the names of those whom you would like to include in the Masses, along with a donation as a Mass offering.

Email the names to denisekay@hotmail.com and mail your offerings to: **MOTHER'S DAY NOVENA, 510 North El Molino Street, Alhambra 91801.**

You may also make a donation through your Faith Direct account; just let us know what the amount is as we transfer the money to the Carmelite Friars.

Then just send your mom, etc., your own cards, making this notation on each:

"Your intentions have been entered into a Novena of Masses offered by the Carmelite Friars of St. Therese Church in Alhambra, California."