

St. Matthew Moms Group

Body, Mind, Spirit

May 2018
Volume 1, Issue 7

A Mother is a Teacher

"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." ~Proverbs 31:26 (NAB)

Henry Ward Beecher once said, "The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom." It can be daunting to realize that as we become mothers, we also become teachers, whether we choose to or not. Our children are watching and learning from us with every passing day. From the moment of our first embrace, they begin observing and absorbing information about themselves, their world, and some of the most important aspects of life.

Clearly, we will never have all the answers, and we cannot completely understand every situation and challenge our children will face. Just as there are no perfect parents, there are no perfect teachers, either. We can only strive to be present in our children, to be approachable and authentic. It's okay to tell them that we don't know something, because in doing so, we teach them humility. It's okay to reveal a personal fault, because by attempting to overcome it, we teach them integrity and strength

of character. More than anything else, our children need us to be genuinely human.

St. Francis de Sales said, "Do not wish to be anything but what you are, and try to be that perfectly." He was the same saint who said, "Be patient with all things, but first of all with yourself." Both bits of wisdom serve us well in our dual vocation as mother and teacher. They remind us to treat ourselves with the same respect and gentle acceptance we extend to our children when we encourage them to do their best without agonizing over their imperfections.

No doubt, we learn from our own mothers that "actions speak louder than words." Our children will always learn more from what we do (or don't do) than from what we say. Reflect on the unspoken lessons you've learned from your mother, and think about the lessons your own children have learned or may be learning from you. Then ask the Holy Spirit, the teacher of your soul, to guide you, know that his lesson plan is the best one of all!

Lord, fill me with your grace, and give my children (and me) a teachable and reachable spirit.

Just for Today: I will make a list of my life's greatest lessons.

Taken from "*Refresh Me, Lord!*"
Meditations to Renew a Woman's Spirit by Anne Costa



Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| The History Behind Mother's Day | 2 |
| Litany of Humility for Mothers | 2 |
| Living the Gospel of Mercy as Mothers | 2 |
| Saint of the Month- St. Rita of Cascia | 3 |
| Mary and Our Spiritual Life | 3 |
| May Liturgical Year Highlights | 4 |
| Resources and Reads | 4 |

A Mother's Day Prayer

*Loving God,
as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children,
so you watch over your Church.*

*Bless these women,
that they may be strengthened as Christian mothers.
Let the example of their faith and love shine forth.*

*Grant that we, their sons and daughters,
may honor them always
with a spirit of profound respect.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.*

Amen.



Reminders:

- Lennie Cox will be speaking about Mother Mary at the May 10th meeting. You won't want to miss this one!
- Mom's Night Out planned for May 16th, details to come!
- We will have a potluck brunch during our May 24th meeting.
- Childcare reservations are required for Moms meetings. Please call ahead 48hrs in advance 704-543-7677.

The History Behind Mother's Day

Mother's Day was first suggested in the United States by Julia Ward Howe, writer of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. She suggested that this day be dedicated to peace. Miss Howe organized Mother's Day meetings in Boston, Mass. yearly. In 1877, Mrs. Juliet Calhoun Blakely inadvertently set Mother's Day in motion. On Sunday, May 11, 1877, which was Mrs. Blakely's birthday, the pastor of her Methodist Episcopal Church left the pulpit abruptly, being distraught over the behavior of his son. Mrs. Blakely stepped to the pulpit to take over the remainder of the service and called for other mothers to join her. Mrs. Blakely's two sons were so touched by her gesture that they vowed to return to their hometown of Albion, Michigan every year to mark their mother's birthday and to pay tribute to her. In addition, the two brothers

also urged business associates and those they met while traveling as salesman to honor their mothers on the second Sunday of May. They also urged the Methodist Episcopal Church in Albion to set aside the second Sunday of each May to honor all mothers, and especially their own.

While there were local celebrations honoring mothers in the late 1800's, it was largely due to the efforts of Anna Jarvis that Mothers Day became a national holiday in the United States. Anna's mother, Mrs. Anna M. Jarvis, had been instrumental in developing "Mothers Friendship Day" which was part of the healing process of the Civil War. In honor of her mother, Miss Jarvis wanted to set aside a day to honor all mothers, living and dead. In 1907, Miss Anna began a campaign to establish a national

Mother's Day. She persuaded her mother's church in Grafton, West Virginia to celebrate Mother's day on the second anniversary of her mother's death, the 2nd Sunday of May. By the next year Mother's Day was also celebrated in her own city of Philadelphia.

Miss Jarvis and her supporters began to write to godly ministers, evangelists, businessmen, and politicians in their crusade to establish a national Mother's Day. This campaign was a success. By 1911, Mother's Day was celebrated in almost every state in the Union. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson made the official announcement proclaiming Mother's Day as a national holiday that was to be held each year on the second Sunday of May.

<http://catholicmom.com/md.04.htm>

"If you ever feel distressed during your day, call upon Our Lady.

Just say this simple prayer, "Mary, mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now." I must admit, this prayer has never failed me."
— Mother Teresa

Litany of Humility for Mothers

Adapted by Tami Kiser from the Litany of Humility by Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930), Secretary of State for Saint Pius X

**O Jesus! Meek and humble of heart,
Hear me.**

From the desire of being esteemed as a "great mom,"

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being seen as the mom with the best snack and healthiest packed lunch,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of always looking like I've got my act together,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being the one consulted about other children's problems because I think I know all

of the answers,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of being pointed out as having a large number of kids and still looking so good,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of wanting my kids to appear holy and saintly, especially when with other moms who really do have saintly kids,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the desire of only wanting this picture of my children's happy faces in a constructive activity so that I can put it on Instagram or Facebook,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being humiliated when by child says an embarrassing word or story,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten

when I'm home with the kids all day and don't get out of the house,

Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being ridiculed when I do go out and find that I've got white spit-up on my black sweater,

Deliver me, Jesus.

That other mothers may be loved more than I, even though I'm surrounded by daily hugs and snuggles,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That other mothers may be esteemed more than I,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That, in the opinion of the world, other mothers may increase and I may decrease,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That other mothers may be praised and I unnoticed,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That other mothers may be preferred to me in everything,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That other mothers may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

[Print this Litany](#)

<http://catholicmom.com/2018/03/20/litany-humility-mothers/>

Living The Gospel of Mercy as Mothers

Let's take this apart and learn from the Holy Father. Here are some steps to find more mercy each day:

Be aware. I think one key thing to be aware of is the "presence of God" in those moments of difficulty.

When we are aware, we have the ability to open our eyes to God's love.

Be patient and open. As the Pope stated, "the Gospel of mercy ... seeks people with patient and open hearts." Patience is a necessary virtue for mothers. We can never get enough of it! The best way to obtain patience is our faith to recognize it is a virtue of our first. All "good gifts" are from above. In order to obtain it, we need to ask the Lord. Keep your

heart open as you lift a prayer for patience. Whether you're dealing with a colicky baby, fighting siblings or the teen years, the open heart will help you to gain patience.

Be a "Good Samaritan." Remember this parable and keep it close to your heart and mind. The "Good Samaritan" helped the person in need without asking for anything back. As a mother, we must do the same. Being a Mom is not about getting the big "pat on the back" or the nice Facebook pat on the comment from our kids. It's about doing good without expecting anything in return. Our children are a gift. This will help us to keep giving love to them and to others.

Be understanding and compassionate. Compassion is the key to unlocking mercy through the "Pascal Mystery of Christ." When we are compassionate mothers who give love with compassion, we are being merciful to our children. It is not always easy. But, just as with anything else, the tough things in life are the things that make a huge difference. Keep being compassionate and keep loving. This is mercy.

Recognize the mystery of each human person. When we recognize the mystery of each person, we can also recognize

that same mystery in our kids. I think when moms put rubber stamps on the foreheads of our kids at an early age ... when we think we have figured them out ... we are wrong. All of us are a work in process. Our children are a work in process and so are we! Always keep this in mind.

Through it all ... pray! Mercy will come through prayer. Never give up! Every prayer is powerful, even if it's something quick. Being a mother is not always easy, but we know it's so worth it.
<http://catholicmom.com/2018/04/04/living-gospel-mercy-mothers/>

Saint of the Month for May – Saint Rita, Feast Day May 22nd

Rita was born in a small village near Cascia, Italy, in 1381. Her parents had waited many years for a child, and they gave thanks to God for Rita's birth. As a child, Rita often visited the nuns at the Augustinian convent in town and hoped to be able to join them one day. Rita's parents had other plans for her. It was the custom in Rita's time for parents to arrange marriages for their children. Rita put aside her own desires and was obedient to her parents. When she was 12, she married Paolo Mancini, the town watchman. They had two sons. Her husband did not treat her well, but Rita remained close to God through her busy days as a wife and mother. Two political groups in Cascia were always feuding. One day, Paolo got caught in the middle of a battle

between the groups and was killed. Not long after, both of Rita's sons died of an illness that swept through her village. Rita was now alone in the world. Her thoughts returned to her childhood dream of becoming a nun. At first the Augustinian Sisters rejected Rita because she had been married, but in time, Rita's prayers were answered. She was welcomed into religious life when she was 36 years old. Her days were filled with prayer and good works. One day, about 20 years after she entered the convent, she was meditating on Christ's Passion and crucifixion. As she prayed, a small wound appeared on her forehead. It looked like a mark from a thorn, like the crown of thorns Jesus wore. This mark remained on Rita's forehead the rest of her life. It was a reminder

of the great sacrifice Christ made out of love for all people. For several months before Rita died, she was unable to get out of bed. A legend about St. Rita tells us that a friend visited her and asked if there was anything she wanted. Rita said that she wanted a rose that was blooming in the yard of the house where she grew up. The friend knew that this was impossible. It was winter, and roses do not bloom in the snow. The woman left Rita and began to walk home, sad that she was not able to give Rita the one thing she had asked for. Along the way, the woman passed Rita's childhood home. To her amazement, a single colorful rose was blooming on the branch of a rosebush. The woman picked the rose and hurried back to the convent to give it to Rita. It was

as if God was rewarding Rita for all the thorns in her life with the miracle of the rose. You will sometimes see artwork of St. Rita holding roses. Rita of Cascia died in 1457 and was canonized in 1900. Along with St. Jude, she is the patron saint of impossible causes. St. Rita's example reminds us to put our faith in God, who raised his only Son, Jesus, from the dead and promises us that we, too, will share everlasting life with him in heaven.

"Most Holy Sacred Heart of Jesus, help my heart to persevere in all that is holy."
~St. Rita

<http://saintsresource.com/rita-of-cascia>

Month of Mary – Mary and Our Spiritual Life

In our observance of the Marian month we should take into account the season of the Liturgical Year, which largely corresponds, with the fifty days of Easter. Our pious exercises could emphasize Our Lady's participation in the Paschal mystery and in Pentecost with which the Church begins. The pious exercises connected with the month of May can easily highlight the earthly role played by the glorified Queen of Heaven, here and now, in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

The following practices, which are recommended by the Magisterium, are offered as suggestions for honoring Our Lady during Her month.

The Regina Coeli

The ecclesial community addresses

this antiphon to Mary for the Resurrection of her Son. It adverts to, and depends on, the invitation to joy addressed by Gabriel to the Lord's humble servant who was called to become the Mother of the saving Messiah.

The Rosary

Also called the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the Rosary is one of the most excellent prayers to the Mother of God. Thus, "the Roman Pontiffs have repeatedly exhorted the faithful to the frequent recitation of this biblically inspired prayer which is centered on contemplation of the salvific events of Christ's life, and their close association with the Virgin Mother."

Litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary

These consist of a long series of

invocations to Our Lady, which follow in a uniform rhythm, thereby creating a stream of prayer characterized by insistent praise and supplication.

Consecration and Entrustment to Mary (Consecration prayer on right hand side of webpage)

The Roman Pontiffs have frequently expressed appreciation for the pious practice of "consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary" and the formulas publicly used by them are well known.

Louis Grignon de Montfort is one of the great masters of the spirituality underlying the act of "consecration to Mary". He "proposed to the faithful

consecration to Jesus through Mary, as an effective way of living out their baptismal commitment."

The Brown Scapular and other Scapulars

The scapular is an external sign of the filial relationship established between the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Mount Carmel, and the faithful who entrust themselves totally to her protection, who have recourse to her maternal intercession, who are mindful of the primacy of the spiritual life and the need for prayer.

[Excepted from the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy](#)

11 Questions Answered About Mary - Our Sunday Visitor

During his visit to Naples in March 2015, Pope Francis spoke to a gathering of priests, seminarians and religious women. In his speech, he told them that a key way to make sure Jesus is at the center of their lives is to "ask his mother to take you to him."

This is the role of Mary in the Church and in our own lives — for who is closer to the Son than his mother?

As the Church celebrates Mary throughout the year, this *In Focus*, compiled by Dr. Robert Fastiggi, a professor of theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and president of the Mariological

Society of America, is designed to help readers more fully understand the Church's teachings regarding the Virgin Mary and why she is truly the "cause of our joy." As Pope Francis said in Naples, "If you don't love the mother, the mother will not give you the Son."

Q: What are Marian apparitions, and how can the Church decide if they are true?

A: Marian apparitions are considered to be private revelations according to what is taught in the Catechism. They don't "improve or complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but help to live more

fully by it in a certain period of history" (No. 67).

Marian apparitions can be investigated and approved by the local bishop, but in some cases, the Holy See takes over the inquiry. In 1978, Paul VI approved a document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that lays out norms for discerning apparitions. Among the criteria used are the harmony of the messages with Catholic doctrine, the docility of the visionaries to Church authority and the signs of the supernatural.

Q: Why is the color blue associated with Mary?

A: In the ancient world, the color blue was associated with royalty. Beginning around A.D. 500, Mary is displayed in Byzantine art wearing a dark blue mantle, which is a sign of her royal dignity as queen. The association of Mary with the color blue spread to the West and has continued throughout the ages.

Q: How old was Mary when she gave birth to Jesus?

Q: If Mary is so important, why does the Bible say so little about her?

For answers to these questions and more, continue reading [here](#).

Feasts for May

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of May are:

1. [Joseph the Worker](#), *Opt. Mem.*
2. [Athanasius](#), *Memorial*
3. [Philip and James](#), *Feast*
6. [Sixth Sunday of Easter](#), *Sunday*
10. [Ascension of Our Lord; Damien de Veuster, priest; John of Avila \(some places\)](#), *Opt. Mem.*
12. [Nereus and Achilleus; Pancras, martyrs](#), *Opt. Mem.*
13. [Ascension or the Seventh Sunday of Easter](#), *Solemnity*
14. [Matthias](#), *Feast*
15. [Isidore the Farmer \(USA\)](#), *Opt. Mem.*
18. [John I](#), *Opt. Mem.*
20. [Pentecost; Whitsunday](#), *Solemnity*
21. [Mary, Mother of the Church; Christopher Magallanes and companions; Eugene de Mazenod \(Canada\)](#), *Opt. Mem.*
22. [Rita of Cascia](#), *Opt. Mem.*
25. [Optional Memorial of St. Bede the Venerable, priest and doctor; St. Gregory VII, pope; St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, virgin](#), *Opt. Mem.*
26. [Philip Neri](#), *Memorial*
27. [Trinity Sunday](#), *Solemnity*
31. [Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#), *Feast*

Moms Spring Meeting Dates

Thursday Mornings:
May 10, 24
June 7

*All meeting times are 10am – 12pm in NLC 239/240/241



May 2018 – Liturgical Year Overview for the Month

- ❖ The month of May is dedicated to [The Blessed Virgin Mary](#). The first 20 days fall within the liturgical season of **Easter**, which is represented by the liturgical color white — the color of light, a symbol of joy, purity and innocence (absolute or restored). The remainder of the month (beginning the Monday after Pentecost) is in **Ordinary Time**, which is represented by the liturgical color green. This symbol of hope is the color of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.
- ❖ The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of May 2018:
Evangelization: The Mission of the Laity
That the lay faithful may fulfill their specific mission, by responding with creativity to the challenges that face the world today. (See also [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#))
- ❖ Highlights:
 - **May 13th - Ascension.** The whole universe is invited to acclaim the glories of the Ascending Christ. He is surrounded with the just of Limbo, with the souls who had finished their purgatorial expiation and probably with the saints who came out of their tombs on Easter Sunday: "Ascending on high He has led captivity captive".
 - **Recipe of the Month: Pentecost Cake.** To celebrate Pentecost try this delicious moist cake, inexpensive and easy to make. It is served with a strawberry frosting.
 - **Activity of the Month: Pentecost Wheel.**
Construct this Pentecost wheel to remind children of the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives. After constructing the wheel, begin using it seven days before Pentecost, discussing a gift of the Holy Spirit each night.

Resources and Reads – Click for link

- ❖ [10 May Activities for Catholic Families](#)
- ❖ Meal idea: [One Pan Baked Fajitas](#)
- ❖ [Honor Mary in the Month of May](#) – plan a May Crowning, free Mary printables, Marian food ideas
- ❖ [Spiritual Bouquets](#) for Mother's Day (May 13th)
- ❖ Celebrate [Pentecost](#) (May 20th) with kids – crafts, songs, food (did I mention Strawberry Cake?!) and more!
- ❖ Celebrate Trinity Sunday (May 27th) with [Trinity Sundaes!](#) Yummy!!
- ❖ Reads: Click [here](#) for the complete list of 'Refreshing Reads for Spring' from Our Sunday Visitor
 - ["One Beautiful Dream: The Rollicking Personal Passions, and Saying Yes to Them"](#) by Jennifer Fulwiler *Don't miss seeing Jennifer at St. Matthew on Wednesday May 9th!
 - ["Gratefulness: The Habit of a Grace-Filled Life"](#) by Susan Muto
 - ["Into His Likeness: Be Transformed as a Disciple of Christ"](#) by Edward Sri

St. Matthew Upcoming Events

- 5/3. Divine Mercy Holy Hour, 7:30pm
5/4. First Friday Ministry, 9:30am
5/4-5/5. First Eucharist Masses – please keep the 441 children making their First Communion in your prayers!
5/8. Spiritual Direction Info Session, 10am
5/9. Jennifer Fulwiler "One Beautiful Dream", 7pm
*tickets required click [here](#)
5/24. St. Peregrine Healing Service, 7:30pm

Please see bulletin or [church website](#) for more information.

Check out the St. Matthew [REACH website](#) for service opportunities for your family!



St. Matthew Moms Group

Mission: St. Matthew Mom's Group supports the vocation of motherhood by strengthening faith through various readings including Scripture, the Catechism and various books applicable to Christian family life. Many moms find the open discussion format to be encouraging and inspiring in developing loving parenting tools and creating a solid Catholic domestic church.

St. Matthew Mom's Group meets every other Thursday throughout the school year. You can drop in for a session at your convenience or attend them all. All mothers are welcome!

Contact Info:

Co-Leaders:
Catherine Sforza
lovemuffin0510@aol.com
Genevieve Roy Holmes
genevievegroy@hotmail.com

Communications:
Becky Lennard
becky.lennard@gmail.com