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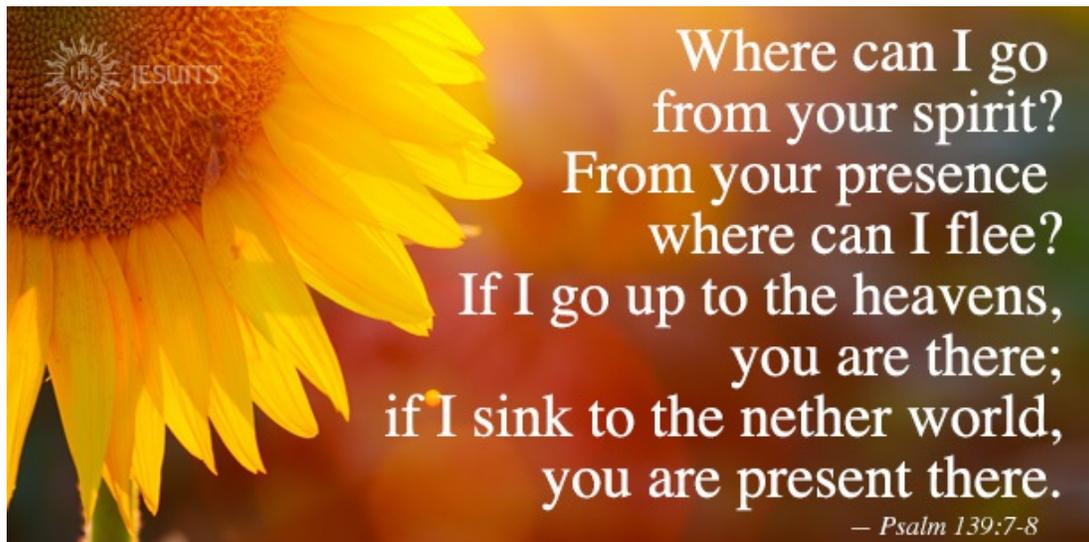


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OUR PIUS UPDATE

May 3, 2022



WHERE IS JESUS LEADING YOU?



Sometimes, we are like the disciples in **John 21**—this whole resurrection thing is just incomprehensible and too confusing. So we revert to our old ways of life not based on faith and the values of Jesus. But Jesus does not give up on his disciples or on us. He inserts his risen self into our lives where we are. For the disciples, he reminds them of their first call from fishing by giving them a large catch. He cooks breakfast for them. He looks Peter in the eye and heals him of his triple denial—do you love me? Feed my sheep? And finally, Jesus says something that has profound meaning for me as I age. Now that we are older, someone else will lead us to places we had not anticipated going to.

Where in your life is Jesus leading you right now? Do you love and trust him enough to follow?

—Fr. Paul Macke, SJ, is the Jesuit Mission Coordinator at the Jesuit Spiritual Center in Milford, Ohio. He co-leads a Spiritual Direction Training Program for the Cincinnati Region.

PRAYER

*Lord Jesus,
we ask you now
To help us to remain with you always,
To be close to you with all the ardor of our hearts,
To take up joyfully the mission you entrust to us
And that is to continue your presence
And spread the news of your Resurrection.*

— Carlo Maria Martini, SJ

SOURCE: www.JesuitPrayer.org

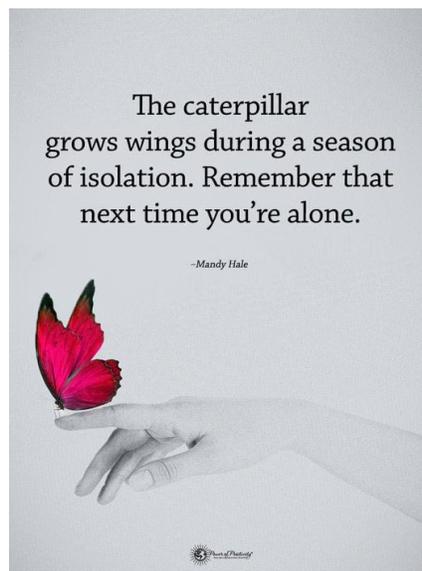
6 WAYS TO ACTIVATE HOPE IN OUR LIVES



Here are six simple ways to renew the hope that feels lost, to experience spring when it is still winter outside.

1. Begin with an act of hope.
2. Spend time with Jesus, asking Him for daily bread to sustain you as we carry your daily cross.
3. Find a Bible verse that can become a daily reminder of hope.
4. Cling to the blessings and gifts God generously shares with you. Gratitude allows us to enter into hope more easily.
5. Remember how the Lord has worked in your life before, so you can hope in how He is working now.
6. Praise Him in the hallway, as you wait for hope to open up to you.

SOURCE: www.catholicmom.com Sarah Damm





MAY, MONTH OF MARY **Celebrating Mary as a Family** **(Woodeene Koenig-Bricker)**

MARY WAS A MOM

The Gospels tell us that Mary was a first-century, peasant woman who became a mother at a young age. She was a woman of integrity who, when faced with the awesome responsibility of becoming the Mother of God, said **"yes"** without much hesitation.

And, though she was the mother of Jesus, it is assumed that Mary experienced many of the same joys and challenges as parents today. In Luke's Gospel we read that Mary lost Jesus in the Temple for three days. What panic she and Joseph must have felt! When his parents finally find him teaching in the Temple, Jesus tells them that they shouldn't have worried for he was in God's house. Luke further records that Mary *"kept all these things in her heart"* (2:51). Mary must have felt great relief at finding Jesus safe and sound, but she also treasures his Words of faith and commitment to God.

MARY WAS A WOMAN OF FAITH

Jesus' practice of and understanding of the Jewish faith as recorded in the New Testament points to the fact that his parents were observant members of the people of Israel. Mary most likely practiced the Jewish religion in their home — following the Torah; keeping the Sabbath, holy days and festivals; and attending synagogue. Luke depicts Mary praying with the other women in the Upper Room at Pentecost, establishing her as a prominent member of the early Christian community in Jerusalem.

MARY WAS A DISCIPLE

Even though she was his mother, Mary is a model disciple — she followed the teachings of her son, Jesus. At the wedding at Cana she asks him to perform a miracle. She is present in the heart-wrenching agony of Jesus' crucifixion and death. From the cross, Jesus gave the care of his mother to St. John. We know from the Gospels that John took her into his home and cared for her. Because John is known to have traveled to Ephesus, in modern-day Turkey, a tradition has arisen that she accompanied him there. A small house in the hills above the historical ruins is venerated as Mary's house, and three popes have made pilgrimages to the site, even though there is no historical evidence that Mary lived there. The first church named in Mary's honor is in Ephesus, however.

HONOR MARY AT YOUR TABLE

For an easy and beautiful way to honor Mary in your home, turn your dining-room or kitchen table into a sacred space.

- Cover the table with a blue tablecloth or place a blue place mat in the center.
- Place a statue of Mary on the cloth or place mat.
- Place one or more blue or white candles on either side of Mary.
- Add a vase with flowers — real, artificial or from your spiritual bouquet.

SOURCE: *Our Sunday Visitor*, May, 2012, pages 4 and 5



WHO IS MARY?

If you look through Catholic art and history, you will find that Mary has been depicted in various ways according to the time period and the culture. If you read the Gospels you will find that the four evangelists have also portrayed her in different ways.

Mark almost seems to see her as an outsider in **3:31-35**. Matthew places her in the Messiah's genealogy, but in the nativity story, the main focus is on Joseph. Luke, on the other hand, portrays Mary as a woman of faith, beginning with the story of the Annunciation and ending with her being with the other disciples at Pentecost. John never actually names her, but John presents her as a faithful disciple, being present at the beginning of Jesus' ministry at Cana and at the end of his ministry at Calvary.

Despite much of the artwork depicting her, Mary was, first of all, a Jewish woman, very unlikely to have had blue eyes or light colored hair. She had a strong belief in the one living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Prayer was a part of her daily life, and despite the fear she felt when the angel came to her, she wasn't afraid to ask questions. She used both faith and reason. She had the courage to say "**yes**", despite the uncertainty and obvious risks involved in becoming pregnant while she was betrothed to Joseph.

What was life like for Mary in Roman occupied Palestine? It was both difficult and dangerous, filled with tension, poverty, unrest and violence. Many women biblical scholars from the Third World see similarities in Mary's life then with those of so many poor women in their own countries now.

When we recall the story of Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem to be counted, they see many poor women and children driven from their homes because of debt, taxation, or decreasing natural resources. When we recall the story of Mary giving birth in a stable, they see many pregnant women who do not have basic pre-natal care, babies who are born in the worst possible conditions, and a high infant mortality rate. When we recall the story of the flight into Egypt, they see women and children running to escape being raped, tortured or killed by unjust or invading military forces. When we recall the story of Mary at the foot of the cross, they see the faces of so many women who have had their sons, fathers or husbands murdered or "*disappear*" at the hands of a dictatorial regime.

Back to the original question, "**Who is Mary?**" She has traditionally been seen as a model of prayer, piety, and obedience to the will of God. She has been seen by some as being very passive. But when we look again at the Gospel stories and think about the times in which she lived, we realize that she was not passive but very pro-active indeed.

Mary is a model of courage in the face of danger - she did what needed to be done to save the life of her child. She was faithful to her vocation even when it was difficult or even dangerous to do so. Mary is a model of faith but she was also not afraid to ask questions. She experienced physical danger at the hands of an unjust regime, but in the **Magnificat** she proclaims a God of justice for all. Mary was greatly puzzled by some of the things that her son said and did, but she loved him unconditionally to the very end. And through it all, she did not lose her own identity, her faith in God, or her faith in herself. Mary certainly must have felt the presence of God when Jesus was born. But she also must have felt the absence of God at Calvary as she heard her son say, "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" But God did not abandon her, any more than God abandons us. The Resurrection assures us that our God is a faithful God, who always **was, is, and will be** with us.

SOURCE: Maria R. Kelsey, Pastoral Assistant

THE MAGNIFICAT

