



Blessed Trinity

Weekend Magazine

Over 60 YEARS COURAGEOUSLY *Living the Gospel*

January 1, 2023 ▪ The Solemnity of Mary

What a year with Mary will do to you

By Meg Hunter-Kilmer



It began as an assignment but ended up making her into a real person.

I wasn't raised with much of an awareness of Holy Days of Obligation, so when I first learned that Catholics are obligated to go to Mass on New Year's Day, I was suspicious. Skeptical atheist that I was, I assumed that the Church had instituted the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, in order to ruin people's New Year's Eve parties.

It was some years before I realized that the pope hadn't convened the world's bishops to scheme about how to put a damper on champagne toasts. The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, was fixed on New Year's Day to focus our hearts on the Blessed Mother from the first day of the year so that she can continue drawing our hearts to Jesus all the year long.

That's what I've been trying to do this year. Mary wasn't part of my family's devotional life when I was growing up, so I've spent the last 20 years playing catch up. I began praying the Rosary in

high school, very much against my inclinations, but never understood how a prayer that was so numerically imbalanced (53 Hail Marys to five Our Fathers) could possibly bring more glory to God than to Mary. But I trusted the wisdom of the Church, so I prayed dry Rosary after dry Rosary in the hopes that one day I would learn to love the Mother of God.

Over the years, I read about Mary. I prayed for a deeper love of her. I made the consecration to Jesus through Mary. I listened to talks. I *gave* talks. And always, always the Rosary.

Gradually, my love for Mary grew. The Lord gave me some graces and moments of clarity that I would cling to, but still it felt labored. Many of my friends loved the Blessed Mother so naturally, so effusively. I was just trying to love her at all.

In one sense, there's nothing wrong with that. Love is a choice, after all, not a feeling. And if the Lord chooses to withhold every consolation from me, I will try to praise him. I will try not to demand feelings of love and longing and delight. I will try to be faithful.

That's where I was this past January. But the Lord seemed to be asking me to spend the year with his Mother, reading Scripture as she did, imagining how she felt at different moments in her life, trying to love Jesus as she did.

I tried to see how she might console survivors of abuse, how she might speak to post-abortive women, how she might comfort those who feel unworthy of her love.

I studied different apparitions and Marian devotions, read Marian songs, and researched Marian books.

And here I stand, 52 weeks later, feeling quite sure that something has changed, though I don't know that I can put it into words. There's a fondness

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Weekday Masses

Monday - Saturday 8:00 AM

Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil at 4:00 PM

Sunday

8:00 AM, 9:30 AM & 11:30 AM

Follow the Sunday Mass on our
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Confessions will be held
Saturdays 2:45-3:45

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... Continued from cover

there that wasn't there before, a smile that passes over my lips when I think of the Blessed Mother. Perhaps it's that I spent 20 years trying to know her purely as my mother and only this year began to know her as she really is: the Mother of God and Mother of all people.

It began, perhaps, as an assignment, a theme for this column that I thought I could stretch to fill the year. But as the weeks went by, I began to see her through so many sets of eyes—and to see so many people through her eyes. And all the details of her sorrow and fear and compassion and joy began to add details to the vague outline of motherhood I'd been trying to love and to make her a real person instead of a mere archetype.

I guess I just didn't know her. In spite of the books I'd read and the talks I'd given, in spite of knowing so much about her and having tried so hard to spend time with her, I'd never let her be real. This year, she's been just that: real Mother, real friend.

And I wasn't wrong, all those years that I insisted that loving Mary well can only make you love Jesus more. This newfound fondness for his Mother pulls me deeper into love of him. The moments of unsought affection for her turn my heart ever more toward him.

I may never be able to stand with the great Marian saints and insist that I've done everything for Mary, but this year my love for her has become less of a dispassionate choice and more of a real relationship. If you're struggling as I've struggled (and will likely still struggle), may I invite you to try to same for 2023? Spend the year seeking to love Mary as her Son loved her, so that she might teach you to love him with your whole heart, soul, strength, and mind.

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TAKE 5 mins with BISHOP GREGORY PARKES

A Conversation with Chris Stefanik about Living with Joy

Tuesday, January 3rd @ 7 pm

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COURAGEOUSLY Living the Gospel



January 1, 2023

Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

Nm 6:22-27 | Gal 4:4-7 | Lk 2:16-21

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Today's readings remind us of the central role Mary plays in the story of Jesus and the story of our salvation. We may be tempted to place her on a pedestal – as well we should – she is the Mother of God! At the same time, today's Gospel reminds us she is not divine herself, but human – and she bore the incarnate flesh of the Son of God in his divine and human nature. She went through the sleepless nights and the uncertainties of parenting in all its stages. She learned early on what it takes many of us a lifetime to learn – often in fits and starts – absolute trust in God. As we celebrate this solemnity, we can bring our uncertainties, fears, and struggles to Mary our mother, asking for the grace to follow her faithful example.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Of course there's nothing wrong with New Year's resolutions, and I always admire people who have thought about them in advance. Me? I'm often tongue-tied on January 1 when someone asks me what my resolutions are (hmm ... maybe I should think about kicking that procrastination habit in 2023?) This is why Mary's reaction to the visit of the shepherds strikes me so profoundly. The shepherds pay homage to Jesus and spread the word that God's Son has been born. Mary, Luke writes, "kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." As we move into a new year, so rich with possibility, we might follow Mary's example and reflect before jumping headlong into this or that goal or New Year's resolution. Instead, perhaps we can take the day – or a week or a month – to prayerfully reflect on how we can best put our faith in Jesus into action. How can we witness to our faith in our daily lives? What changes might help us do that? We can ask God to help us draw up a list of ways that we can be more faithful to him.

PRAY Pray the Hail Mary, reflecting on each line with gratitude. If you have more time, give yourself a "mini-retreat" by reading or reflecting on a book or devotional about Mary.



Are You Hoping to Receive One of the Seven Sacraments With Us?

Matrimony

Congratulations on your engagement! Every Diocese in Florida requires at least six months preparation before marriage. Please call our Pastor, Fr. Wayne Genereux, at the Parish Office for an appointment before setting a date.

Baptism

We are honored that you would like to choose Blessed Trinity Catholic Church for the baptism of your child! We ask that you please call our Pastor, Fr. Wayne Genereux, at the Parish Office for information regarding the pre-baptism class before scheduling a baptism.

Office Hours

Monday—Friday 9-12 and 1-4
Closed for Lunch Noon to 1 pm

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 31, Vigil for the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

4:00 p.m. Christopher Boss (Liv)

Sunday, January 1, Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

8:00 a.m. Maria Williams (Dec)

9:30 a.m. Mass for Parishioners

11:30 a.m. Betty Alexander (Dec)

Monday, January 2, Memorial of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church

8:00 a.m. Deceased Members of the Beddoe Family

Tuesday, January 3, Christmas Weekday

8:00 a.m. Teresa Badami (Dec)

Wednesday, January 4, Memorial of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

8:00 a.m. Mass for Vocations

Thursday, January 5, Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop

8:00 a.m. Deceased Members of the Roberts Family

Friday, January 6, Christmas Weekday

8:00 a.m. Thelma Dover (Dec)

Saturday, January 7, Christmas Weekday

8:00 a.m. Marie Kerr (Liv)

Saturday, January 7, Vigil for The Epiphany of the Lord

4:00 p.m. Betty Alexander (Dec)

Sunday, January 8, The Epiphany of the Lord

8:00 a.m. Betty Alexander (Dec)

9:30 a.m. Mass for Parishioners

11:30 a.m. Byron B. Mays (Dec)

Prayer for Priests & Future Priests

Eternal Father, We lift up to you these and all the priests of the world. Sanctify them, heal and guide them. Mold them into the likeness and holiness of your Son Jesus, the Eternal High Priest. May their lives be pleasing to you. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

01/01 • Pope Francis

01/02 • Rev. Erwin Belgica

01/03 • Msgr. Michael Carruthers

01/04 • For Vocations to Priesthood & Religious Life

01/05 • Rev. Robert Cadrecha

01/06 • Rev. Michael Cormier

01/07 • Rev. Jose Glenn Diaz



Fr Jack MacDowell, OFM wants to thank all the Blessed Trinity parishioners for their kindness during the holidays and wishes everyone all the best in the New Year !



Christmas Flowers

In addition to the names previously listed, the following have also donated to our beautiful Christmas flowers:

*Mary Cesarano
Ms. Barbara Acree*

In Gratitude



Thank You ... Thank You... for all the support that you gave to our Blessed Trinity Saint Vincent de Paul Conference Giving Tree.

Over forty families and 90 children benefitted from your wonderful generosity. You helped them have a brighter Christmas. **God Bless You.**

Marriage Jubilee



The Marriage Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving will take place at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle on Sunday, February 12 at 3:00 pm. This event honors couples throughout the diocese who will celebrate their 25th anniversary as well as those celebrating 50 or more years

of marriage during the 2023 calendar year.

Please RSVP to our parish office at (727) 867-3663 by Tuesday, January 17 if you will be attending.

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EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

Listen. Think. Act.

That is a mantra or slogan for many different groups. Some seek to battle prejudice and bias. Other groups hope to eliminate poverty or reduce crime. I have even found some companies use it as a way of increasing engagement among their employees. In a nutshell, it is about taking in what you have heard and then reflecting on it before you act. The most fruitful actions are those that take place after careful reflection.

This is an important thing to remember for those trying to live a stewardship way of life. If we are honest with ourselves, too often most of us jump to conclusions too quickly or act in ways that cause friction because we didn't really think about the consequences of our actions. We are moving too fast in a world that seems to be moving ever faster.

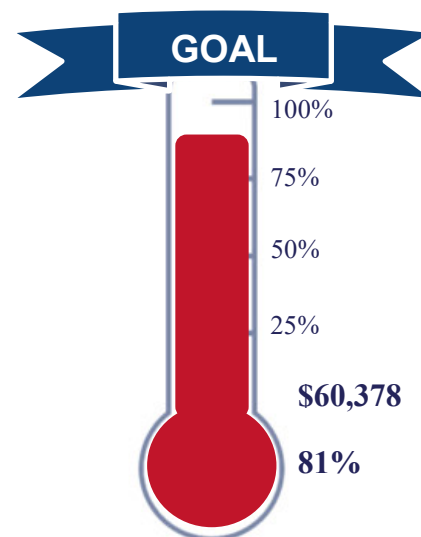
When the shepherds came to visit Jesus, the newborn King, they told Mary everything that the angels had told them. Luke tells us that after hearing all this, she "kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." No response. No panic. No action. Her reflection was the appropriate response.

In this New Year, you and I would do well to remember this Gospel account of Mary, the Mother of God. Let us resolve to listen more, reflect often, and then act accordingly. We are called to use our gifts wisely, sowing them in good soil. If we just throw them out, allowing them to simply fall wherever they may, have we really used them for God's glory? We need to listen. Think. Then act.



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For questions, contact the Diocese of St. Petersburg Campaign Office at stock-iradonations@dosp.org or 727.341.6841.

Living as a Disciple Takes Courage *We got this!*

- Join our Scripture Reflection community!
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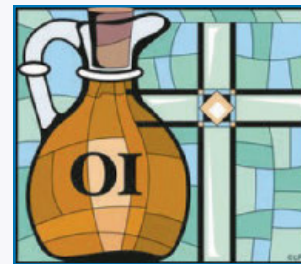


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To request the Anointing of the Sick for yourself or a loved one, please contact the parish office, 727-867-3663.

If you or a close family member would like to be added or removed from our prayer list, please contact the parish office at 727-867-3663.



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