

150th Anniversary



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

“Mary, the Mother of God, is a model for all who would live in the spirit of the Gospel. Because she was so intimately united to the mystery of her Son, we honor her as Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.”
(Constitutions 64: Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart)

“For this heart you are in the midst of the world. We have experienced God’s love and are called to share it through our being, our actions, in all circumstances, at all times.”

Hubert Linckens

“Our Lady of the Sacred Heart has not yet spoken her final word. It is she herself who has inspired this title so expressive of her relations with the Heart of Jesus. A day will come when the devotion to Mary under this title will be seen to embrace all other Marian devotions. It is beginning to spread. The persecution may, it is true, hinder its diffusion, but this will be only for a time...

Many girls, attracted by the devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, will want to come and share the way of life of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, to share also your merits. You will have flourishing works and numerous houses.”

Marie Louise Hartzler

Reflective Questions

- 1. “... Let us live like you in the Love of your Son ...”
How do I live and give witness to this love in my life today?**
- 2. Write your own Litany to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Let it be your prayer for assistance as you journey on now with Mary into the heart of the world in which you are living.**

Prayer

Memorare to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Introduction

Mary is Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - she is the one who has gone before us. Mary now challenges us, leads us and guides us to accomplish the mission of her Son so that the Kingdom of God may come.

Mary, help us to live like you in the Love of your Son.

Matthew 6:33-34



Front cover:

The statue in the cloister at Issoudun marks the spot where Fr Chevalier first pronounced the title “Our Lady of the Sacred Heart”

“During this time of vigil Mary, through the same faith which made her blessed, especially from the moment of the Annunciation, is present in the Church’s mission, present in the Church’s work of introducing into the world the Kingdom of her Son.”

Redemptoris Mater, No. 28

“...Since all his riches are in your hands, pour them out on us your children. Warm our souls with the divine fire that consumes him; obtain that our hearts be made one with the Heart of Jesus and with yours, which is like his in everything: one heart and one soul.”

Jules Chevalier

“... Mary was with the apostles to encourage them in their struggles, with the confessors of the faith flooding them with enlightenment... All these abundant blessings were drawn from the Heart of her Son, the Heart open to her as to its Treasurer.”

Jules Chevalier

Reflective Questions

- 1. Give an example when you were open to the light and power of the Spirit of God within you.**
- 2. The language of “love” is universal. How well do I speak it?**

Prayer

*Mary, you were with the apostles
as they waited for the Holy Spirit.
Today, when churches are often empty,
be with us to welcome the Spirit of renewal.
In these difficult times of fear and brokenness,
be with us to welcome the Spirit of daring
and give to the church a face which is alive and radiant!*

Pierre Pythoud, msc

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Woman of Pentecost

Introduction

Mary is prayerfully present in the heart of the community as she awaits the coming of the Holy Spirit. She warmly welcomes the Spirit into her life to lead and guide her onwards.

This same Spirit that nourished the life of Mary continues to nourish the life of the Church.

Acts 1:12-14

Acts 2:1-13



“But since it pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery of the salvation of the human race until He poured forth the Spirit promised by Christ, we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost ‘continuing with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and with his brethren’. We see Mary prayerfully imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation.”

Lumen Gentium, No.59

Letter of Introduction

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

At a meeting in Rome, the members of the Tri Generalate discussed how we might contribute to the celebration of the 150th anniversary of devotion to Mary under the title *Our Lady of the Sacred Heart*. The desire was to produce a resource which would provide the members of the Chevalier Family with a means of (a) deepening their understanding of the richness of this devotion and (b) strengthening their conviction of its relevancy and value in our world today.

The booklet which follows looks at nine aspects of Mary’s life and calls us to reflect on them using scriptural references, extracts from Church documents, relevant quotations from Fr Jules Chevalier, Fr Hubert Linckens and Mother Marie Louise Hartzler, reflection questions and prayer. You will also find a number of illustrations from different cultures representing Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Individuals or communities are free to use some or all of these elements in a way that is most beneficial to them. For example, you may wish to add or substitute images of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart from your own country. It is our hope that this material would be shared with our Lay Associates.

Special thanks to the following Tri Generalate members who prepared this booklet: Fr Tino Fernández msc, Fr Luís Carlos Moraes msc, Sr Tess Veenker msc and Sr Renisa Fonseca fdnsc.

May our prayerful reflection lead us to see how we might give renewed vitality to this devotion so that through it the people of our time can find hope and meaning in their lives.

Feast of the Annunciation 2009

Sr Mary Fyfe FDNsc

Sr Mechthild Schnieder MSC

Fr Mark McDonald MSC

Superiors General

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart – Called by God

Introduction

The young woman from Nazareth is called by God: Mary listens with her heart, dialogues, believes, because nothing is impossible to God. Then she answers God's call.

Luke 1:26-38



“Enriched from the first instant of her conception with the splendor of an entirely unique holiness, the virgin of Nazareth is hailed by the heralding angel, by divine command, as ‘full of grace’, and to the heavenly messenger she replies: ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word’ (Lk 1:38).”

Lumen Gentium, No. 56

“Why has God heaped such great gifts on Mary? And predestined her for so many marvels? Because the Lord has looked upon the humility of his servant (Lk 1:48). The Virgin’s humility is the reason for all her greatness. The more God sees a soul empty of itself the more he raises it towards the inaccessible heights of his throne.”

Jules Chevalier

“Mary does not leave him - if he is nailed to the cross, Mary is strong and courageous in sharing his sufferings and receiving his last testimony; if he is taken from the cross, Mary is first to receive him in her arms and check the flow of blood from the wound in his Heart whose love she fully understands...”

Jules Chevalier

Reflective Questions

- 1. Can I share with Mary the pains and sorrows that I have experienced and acknowledge the sufferings and hurts that I may have inflicted on others? Can I also become a witness and teacher of non-violence?**
- 2. Is my “love” great enough to give forgiveness and to receive forgiveness?**

Prayer

*Now that we are with you, Mary,
at the foot of the cross,
we offer to you our little faith.
Open our hands, as you open yours,
to receive from the Heart of your Son
the water that flows from his Love.*

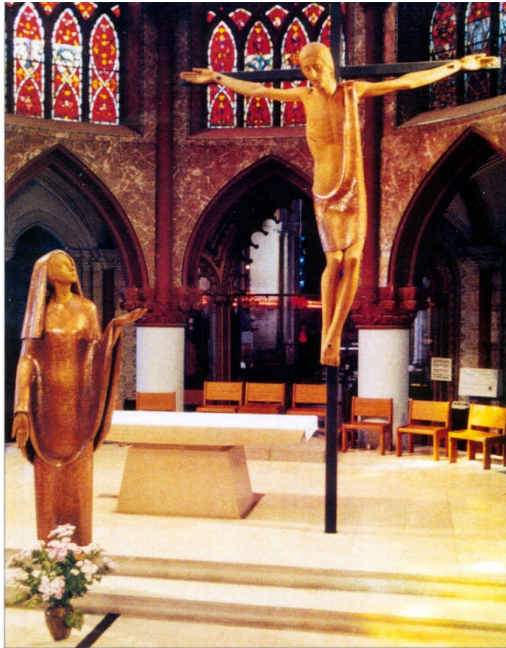
Pierre Pythoud, msc

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Mary at the Foot of the Cross

Introduction

As Mary stays at the foot of the Cross, she remains ever faithful to her Son. Through her pilgrimage with Him, she now comes to share in this moment of her Son's suffering and sees His pierced Heart. Mary throughout history shares in the pain of all who suffer and whose hearts are pierced.

John 19:25-27



“Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and loyally persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross. There she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, suffering grievously with her only-begotten Son. There she united herself with a maternal heart to His sacrifice, and lovingly consented to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth. Finally, the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross gave her as mother to His disciple. This He did when He said: ‘Woman, behold thy son’.”

Lumen Gentium, No. 58

Reflective Questions

1. **How do I remember the call of God in my life?**
2. **How do I experience the call of God in my life today?**

Prayer

*Mary, Our Lady of “Yes” to the Spirit,
may God still speak through us in our days.
Give us your heart to love tenderly,
give us your hands to share with generosity,
give us your eyes to see broadly,
give us your voice to sing our joys.*

Pierre Pythoud, msc

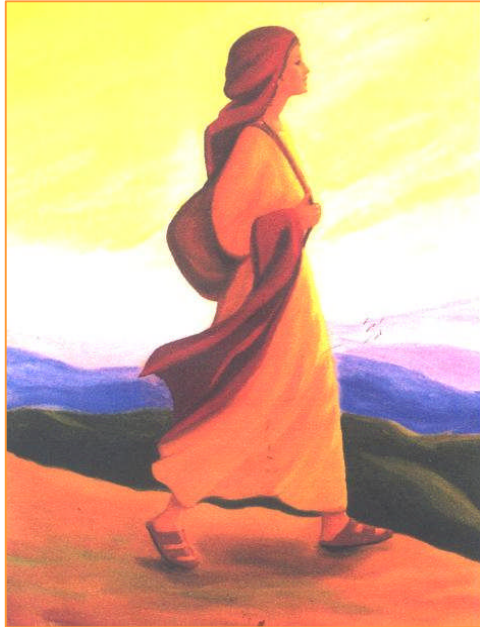
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Missionary and Pilgrim

Introduction

Mary is fully committed to the Lord in her response of 'Yes'. She gives of herself as she leaves and journeys towards Elizabeth's home. To do so she had to leave her own home in order to encounter others.

Mary the missionary, always on the way.

Luke 1:39-45



“Moved by charity, therefore, Mary goes to the house of her kinswoman. When Mary enters, Elizabeth replies to her greeting and feels the child leap in her womb, and being ‘filled with the Holy Spirit’ she greets Mary with a loud cry: ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!’.”

Redemptoris Mater, No.12

“The more you practice this, the more pleasing you will be to the Heart of Jesus and to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and the more quickly you will advance in the way of perfection. Give yourselves without reserve to Mary, and she will guard you as her own possession. She will sustain you in the trials through which you must still pass. She will help you not to become discouraged in the midst of difficulties. Despite appearances to the contrary, she will make fruitful your prayers, tears, and daily sacrifices. Then abandon yourselves totally to her, with love and confidence.”

Marie Louise Hartzler

Reflective Questions

1. What does it mean for me to belong to God's Family, to be like Mary, a disciple of God?
2. Can I, like Mary, feel the power of God's Spirit within me?

Prayer

*We give thanks Lord for Mary,
woman with an open heart
who, as a Mother, listened to and kept your Word
so that it might become a Living Word
to be shared with all.*

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Disciple

Introduction

As the first disciple, Mary listens to the Word of God and keeps it deeply within her heart.

To be a disciple demands a listening heart, so that the Word may become incarnate and transformed into a Living Word, to be shared with others.

Matthew 12:46-50



“Is not Mary the first of ‘those who hear the word of God and do it’? And therefore does not the blessing uttered by Jesus in response to the woman in the crowd refer primarily to her? ...Mary is worthy of blessing by the very fact that she became the mother of Jesus according to the flesh (‘Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked’), but also and especially because already at the Annunciation she accepted the word of God, because she believed it, because she was obedient to God, and because she ‘kept’ the word and ‘pondered it in her heart’ and by means of her whole life accomplished it.”

Redemptoris Mater, No.20

“... She leaves with haste, says the holy gospel.

No matter that the road she has to take is mountainous.

The love in the Heart of Jesus urges her on; she does not want to cause any delay.

Weariness is nothing for her; the Will of God is everything.

Do we have the same zeal as Mary to do the good that is within our power?”

Jules Chevalier

Reflective Questions

- 1. Think about those who, like Mary, serve you in different ways. Pray for them and their intentions.**
- 2. In your community, discuss some of the ways in which life is not respected in the world.
How can you, as a community, improve these situations?**

Prayer

*Mary, I desire very much to be like you!
Help me to have an intimate faith like you
that I may be full of divine love,
and an open faith that I may welcome
all my brothers and sisters as you do.
With you, may my closeness
with the Father and your Son
always lead me in the Holy Spirit
to love my brothers and sisters.*

Pierre Pythoud, msc

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Magnificat – Woman of Praise

Introduction

“Happy are you for you have believed”

Mary stands for the poor of Yahweh throughout history. She in her own humbleness recognizes the revelation of God’s greatness and power. God is among the poor, the small ones and the marginalized.

Mary proclaims the closeness of God.

Luke 1:45-56



“The Church’s love of preference for the poor is wonderfully inscribed in Mary’s Magnificat. The God of the Covenant, celebrated in the exultation of her spirit by the Virgin of Nazareth, is also he who ‘has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly, ... filled the hungry with good things, sent the rich away empty, ... scattered the proud-hearted ... and his mercy is from age to age on those who fear him’. Mary is deeply imbued with the spirit of the ‘poor of Yahweh’, who in the prayer of the Psalms awaited from God their salvation, placing all their trust in him.”

Redemptoris Mater, No. 37

“ ‘Woman, why do you turn to me?’ (Jn 2:4) What does it matter to you or me if the guests are to be without wine; that is the responsibility of the bridegroom... It is the Man-God who speaks here, the supreme Master owing submission to none. But then the Man-God who speaks submits freely... Jesus does what his mother does not ask for... Jesus then changes the water into wine and performs his first miracle...”

Jules Chevalier

Reflective Questions

- 1. How is my relationship, my union with God? Do I celebrate it? Mary constantly refers back to Jesus – do I constantly in my daily living refer all things back to Jesus?**
- 2. What are the needs of the community in which I live and how can/do I respond? Who are the ones who have “no wine” ... no hope ... no purpose/meaning in my community? Can I offer them the “wine” of hope ... love ... understanding?**

Prayer

*Mary, God gave you the gift of trust.
At Cana, you listened to others’ needs.
May our listening be attentive like yours
so that, with you, we will know
how to help our brothers and sisters!*

Pierre Pythoud, msc

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Mary in Cana

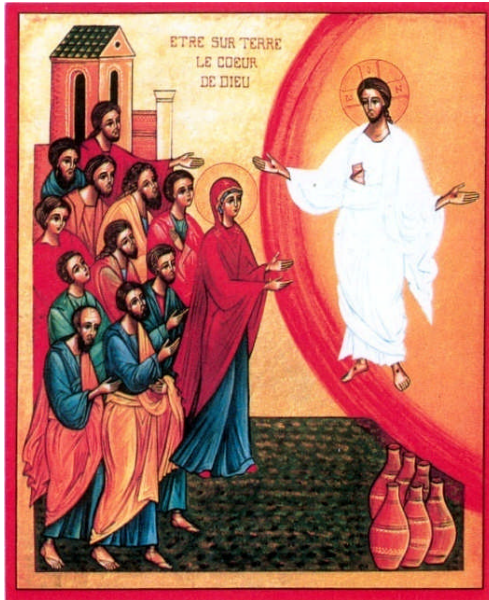
Introduction

Mary in Cana shares in the joy of a Wedding Feast. As servant she is the first to notice that they are running out of wine. In compassion she pleads to her son on behalf of the newly wedded couple.

“They do not have wine.”

“Do whatever he tells you.”

John 2:1-8



“Mary is present at Cana in Galilee as the Mother of Jesus, and in a significant way she contributes to that ‘beginning of the signs’ which reveal the messianic power of her Son. ... In John’s text on the other hand, the description of the Cana event outlines what is actually manifested as a new kind of motherhood according to the spirit and not just according to the flesh, that is to say Mary’s solicitude for human beings, her coming to them in the wide variety of their wants and needs.”

Redemptoris Mater, No.21

“Because Mary is without stain, immaculate, she is entirely open and surrenders herself to everything that comes from on high; God can come down and fill her being. A place is prepared for him, wherever he goes within her; she is ready and cooperates, whatever he wishes to do ... Every grace can and will stream into her whose depths can contain all.”

Jules Chevalier

Reflective Questions

1. **Like Mary, how full is my spirit, my soul, with joy in God? If I were to write my own Magnificat what would it say?**
2. **Share with your community some of your experiences of gratitude.**

Prayer

*Mary, teach us to sing
of the magnificent love of God
in the Heart of your Son!*

*Teach us to realize that we are the “beloved” of the Father.
Teach us to recognize that the Heart of your Son is present
in the hearts of all our brothers and sisters.*

Then we will be able to sing with you:

“My soul glorifies the Lord”

*because He has given us the wonders of his love,
which enables us to give life to others with all our heart.*

Pierre Pythoud, msc

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart - Immigrant in Bethlehem & Egypt

Introduction

Mary is always on the way. As an immigrant in Bethlehem she was forced to fulfill the decree of the emperor. She then had to flee into Egypt to escape the violent orders of a King so as to save her son. Mary shares in the exile of many immigrants today who leave their lands for different reasons - she suffers with them the consequences of migration.

Luke 2:1-7
Matthew 2:13-15



“Mary together with the child has to flee into Egypt in the protective care of Joseph, for ‘Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him’.”
Redemptoris Mater, No.16

“... we trust to obtain help, assistance and protection from Our Lady, even if all human help has disappeared, because she is for us the ‘Hope of the hopeless’.”

Hubert Linckens

Reflective Questions

- 1. How well can I identify with Mary the immigrant?
Can I journey with her in prayer and share the stories and experiences we have in common?**
- 2. Already our Sisters, Brothers, Fathers and many lay people who share our charism and spirituality extend a hand of friendship to people who suffer because they are different. Name some of the ways in which this compassion is shown.**

Prayer

*Mary, you made difficult choices and believed
that the impossible could be done.
Help us to be companions on the journey
with other Christians,
to be united with them in a world
that is always on the move!
Help us to believe in the impossible.
May we dare to open the doors of our hearts
so that love will be the true winner everywhere.*

Pierre Pythoud, msc