

Assistant Pastor's Column

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Mother's Day in Heaven

How could a single more day of May go by, without us turning to our mother in heaven, to shower upon her our most affectionate sentiments?

Today is Mother's Day, and it is a mark of great pride for our nation, and even the whole Western World, that we consider the special honoring of our mothers so important as to set a day of the year aside just for that.

People in various countries honor their moms in countless different ways. Presents and gifts, dinners and attentions, bouquets of flowers but also spiritual bouquets full of promises of prayers for mom. In Mexico, it's not rare that in the mornings, families sing the *Mañanitas*, a traditional song of great joy and faith also sung on occasions such as birthdays.

And so it is that mothers are a true source and guardian of life and of love in the bosom of every home, a role that cannot be substituted and of incalculable importance.

Things being so, we turn to our spiritual mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. For she is truly the mother of God, because she is the mother of Jesus who is true God. If our spiritual home is heaven, and our spiritual house on earth is this parish or that, then Mary is also for us a source and guardian of supernatural life and divine love, and it is most appropriate that we honor her in a special way.

It might be easy for us to skip over the great love that the Holy Trinity has for the Immaculate Mother of God, Mary. Sometimes we just think that she was "special," but that somehow she "cheated" in attaining perfection, because God preserved her from original sin and gave her so many extraordinary spiritual gifts. And we easily forget that, as much as God gave her these gifts, *she freely col-*

laborated with God's grace in the most perfect way. As *Lumen Gentium* (56) says, "The Fathers [of the Church] see Mary not merely as passively engaged by God, but as freely cooperating in the work of man's salvation through faith and obedience."

The love, then, which this one woman had for God and for others was something which at the same time was both a gift of God and an accomplishment of her soul. And what immeasurable love this is! For she has become Mother of God, but then Jesus made her our own Mother when, at the foot of the cross, he said, "Woman, behold your son; son, behold your mother" (Jn 19:26).

Let us on Mother's Day, then, remember both our mothers on earth, with the dearest tokens of love, but also our Mother in Heaven. We can do so in many ways. A special visit to an image of her in our parishes. Bring her some flowers with tender prayers. Make a special promise to her to overcome some habit of sin, as it most pleases Mary when we come closer

and closer to her Son, Jesus, who is the Mediator and eternal Son of God.

But above all, please her by trusting her. It fills her with joy when her children – you and me – come to her to obtain those graces we need to live holy lives and get to heaven. Yes, she wants you to ask from her, for her intercession is more powerful than the prayers of any angel or saint in heaven, and all she asks from God, she gets. Ask, ask Mary, and you shall receive (cf. Luke 11:10). And so have a happy mother's day, in the presence of all the angels and saints, who greatly honor the Mother of God on Mother's Day in heaven.



"Who am I, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Lk 1:43), said Elizabeth to Mary. This is an illustration in a 15th Century Liturgy of the Hours book (Netherlands, 1460, Euing Collection, folio 58v, The Visitation, Laudes).