

## **Loving Jesus with Mary, from Mary, and through Mary**

10th Sunday in Ordinary Time (B) – Mk 3:20-35

Ave Maria Catholic Church. June 9, 2024. Fr. David M Vidal

We welcome the *Totus Tuus* leadership team, who will lead the *Totus Tuus Camp* this week in our parish. They will guide one hundred children in the mornings and afternoons and sixty teens in the evenings.

The *Totus Tuus* program has five pillars: The Eucharist (they will participate every day in our noon Mass), Marian Devotion (they will meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary), Catechetical Instruction (they will learn the treasures of our Catholic Faith), Vocation Discernment (leaders are committed to discern God’s will for them), and Fun (with games and activities, they will show that happiness is a characteristic of Christian life). Please take time to meet the leadership team and welcome them after Mass.

Let us turn to the gospel of this Sunday’s liturgy. Jesus asked: “*Who are my mother and my brothers?*” . . . Then, He answered: “*Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother.*” That is the definition of the life and the person of Mary. Mary is the woman who loves God with her whole heart, mind, soul, and strength. Doing God’s will is what Mary desires. Doing God’s will is the reason for Mary’s existence. Her heart was created for it and her heart was ready for it.

Reflecting on Mary’s motherhood, the Venerable Fulton Sheen teaches: “*The perfection of all motherhood is Mary, the Mother of Jesus, because she is the only mother in all the world who was 'made to order by her Divine Son . . . He thought of her before she was born . . . But God not only 'thought about Mary, He actually created her . . . If God labored six days in preparing a paradise for man, He would spend a longer time preparing a paradise for His Divine Son.*” (*The World's First Love, Mary Mother of God*).

After celebrating the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus last Friday, we turned our eyes to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This Sunday, when we hear how Jesus praises his mother, let us contemplate Jesus through Mary’s heart.

The eyes of Mary’s heart were already turned to Jesus at the Annunciation when she conceived Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her eyes were filled with adoration and wonder after she gave birth to Him in Bethlehem.

Then, with the heart of a mother, Mary questioned Jesus after He was found in the Temple: “*Son, why have you treated us so?*” (Lk 2:48). With the heart of a mother, She understood Jesus’s hidden feelings and anticipated his decisions, as at the wedding in Cana (Jn 2:5). With the heart of a mother, She looked at Jesus with sorrow, as She stood beneath the Cross when She received us as her children in the person John (Jn 19:26-27). With the heart of a mother, She was radiant with joy at the Resurrection.

Mary's heart was fixed on Jesus, and She treasured every word and action of her Son: *“She kept all these things, pondering them in her heart”* (Lk 2:19 and 2:51).

### **First, we must remember Christ with Mary.**

We must remember God with a loving memory. That is what we read in the book of Deuteronomy: *“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words . . . Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead,”* (Deut 6: 4-8).

Remembering is a fundamental act of religion. We must exercise our memories because we must not forget the great works of the Lord! In her canticle, Mary teaches us how to remember: *“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked with favor on his lowly servant . . . He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.”* To remember means to bring the past to the present. God's promises and saving actions touch our lives.

Explaining this act of remembering, St John Paul II teaches: *“The saving events not only belong to “yesterday”; they are also part of the “today” of salvation. This making present comes about above all in the Liturgy: What God accomplished centuries ago did not only affect the direct witnesses of those events; it continues to affect people in every age with its gift of grace,”* (*The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary*).

### **Second, we must learn Christ from Mary.**

It is not just a matter of learning what Jesus taught and did but of “learning Him.” Now, if we desire to learn Jesus, could we have a better teacher than Mary? Just with a few words, Mary leads us directly to Christ.

How do we know if we have truly learned Christ? What is the ultimate test that proves our learning? Mary reveals that secret at the wedding in Cana when She tells the servants to do whatever Jesus commands (Jn 2:5). That teaching was sufficient to produce a miracle of grace, and many became believers.

To learn Christ, we must not only remember His words and actions but also, and especially, we must do what He tells us to do. Our faith in Christ should not be reduced to a theory. We could still remember our catechism, but that memory does not make us better Christians if we do not practice what we have heard. Our faith in Christ has practical consequences.

We can never claim that we have learned Christ if we are not willing to do what He commands us to do.

**Finally, we must be conformed to Christ through Mary.**

First, we listen and remember; then, we learn by obeying Jesus's commands. However, the disciple of Jesus will discover a higher union with Christ. Since Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and no one goes to the Father except through Him, we are not only encouraged to obey His commandments, but we are also invited to imitate His life.

That is Mary's ultimate lesson. Mary unites herself with Jesus in His passion, and by suffering with Christ, She shares in Jesus's act of redemption. She is conformed to Christ. She becomes one in mind and heart with her Son. This is what love does. Love makes equals. Love unifies. Love identifies. Love assimilates. We are invited to conform our lives to the life of Jesus, and Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, will assist us in accomplishing this spiritual transformation.

Let us remember Christ with Mary. Let us learn Christ from Mary. Let us be conformed to Christ through Mary.