

Family Prayer

Mother's Day - 12 May 2024

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We acknowledge the First Nations peoples of this land, the Traditional Custodians who have nurtured new life for thousands of years. We recognise their enduring connection to the land, seas, skies, and waterways on the lands that we are guest upon. We show respect to the Elders who shared the memories, traditions, and stories of the First People. May we honour the wisdom of the First Peoples and work together towards a hope-filled future towards truth and healing.

Context

Mother's day

Mother's Day is celebrated on various dates worldwide as a day to honour the unwavering dedication, selflessness and love that mothers and mother figures exhibit in their daily roles. In the Catholic Tradition, the month of May is dedicated to Mary, a woman who "teaches us about accepting God's will and trusting God even when we are not sure." [i] Mary's courage and strength serves as a perfect model of faith and discipleship.



The Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel. Stained glass window by A Poncet, St Paul church: Geneva, Switzerland.[ii]

Scripture

Luke (1:30-38)

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reflection

A Christian understanding of the annunciation to Mary as depicted in Luke's Gospel is an extraordinary testament to the strength of a young woman who, though powerless in many ways, demonstrated great courage to accept the call and become mother to the Son of God. Her entire life pivoted the instant she said 'yes'.

Throughout time, mothers from across the world have sought comfort from Mary's journey to motherhood, especially those whose lives have also pivoted unexpectedly. From the moment I became a mother, amidst the Covid 19 lockdowns of 2020, I also instantly (and unexpectedly) became a medical parent. For those of us whose journey to motherhood also took them to [Holland, rather than Italy](#)^[ii], we perhaps share a unique insight into the type of courage and strength it must have taken Mary to say 'yes' as we journey with our beautiful children. But Mary's example has even more to teach us – that is, the courage it takes to give our precious one(s) space.

In Pope Francis' first Angelus of the new year, he reflected that Mary "is Mother not only because she carried Jesus in her womb and gave birth to him but because she brings him into the light, without occupying his place."^[iii] Talk about a challenge! Every day I look upon my child's face with amazement at God's gift; however, due to his health challenges, I have always found myself very much occupying his 'place', remaining close at all times, ready to leap into action to save him. But after returning to work this year and entrusting my son's care to my husband and nurses, I have witnessed a profound transformation and growth in his development. Here, I will continue to look to Mary as a model of restraint in allowing my child to occupy his own place to reach his full potential.

This Mother's Day I reflect on Mary, who exemplifies Pope Francis' message that "Love never stifles; love makes room for the other and lets them grow."^[iv] In this way, I also reflect on the times when my own mother juggled the balance between providing comfort and allowing me space at key points in my life, such as the day I moved out of the family home, my wedding day, the day my son was born. How challenging it must have been for her to let go bit by bit to allow me to flourish. Our mothers and mother figures truly are courage and strength personified.

Prayer

Loving God,
Bless all mothers and mother figures as they balance giving comfort and space so that their children may flourish.
May we honour and cherish their example of love, selfless devotion, and their trust in God's will.
Help us to appreciate the everyday loving sacrifices of those who mother us.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, whose love endures always.
Amen.

Call to Action

- Hold the memories of times when a mother figure both comforted you and provided space for you to grow and give thanks for their love and wisdom.
- Show your children pictures of the women who have helped you in your life and let your children know why these people were so important.
- Spend some time reflecting on a parent's journey by reading the short essay, [Welcome to Holland](#)

References

- [I] Coleman, Cindy. Introducing Children to the Blessed Mother. Catechist's Journey – Loyola Press. Accessed 7 May, 2024.
<https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2019/05/introducing-children-to-the-blessed-mother/>
- [II] Kingsley, Emily Perl. Welcome to Holland.
<https://www.emilyperlkingsley.com/welcome-to-holland>
- [III] Santucci, Matthew. Pope Francis reflects on Mary's motherhood, prays for Nicaragua during New Year's Angelus. Catholic News Agency. Updated January 1, 2024. Accessed May 3, 2024.
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/256412/pope-francis-new-years-day-angelus-mary-mother-of-god-nicaragua>
- [IV] Santucci, Pope Francis reflects on Mary's motherhood.