

# On Every Mother's Face a Reflection of Mary

Pope John Paul II delivered the following message to the young people who attended his Wednesday audience of Jan. 10.

Dear boys and girls,

1. This morning, too, there are so many of you. This great basilica is pervaded with the joyful pulsation of your youth and is brightened by the light of your smile. The warmth of enthusiasm spreads on the wave of your silvery voices and becomes an invitation to confidence and optimism, in spite of the dark clouds that can be glimpsed on the horizon even in this dawn of a new year. God be thanked for the freshness of your sentiments and for the sincerity of your adherence to every great and noble idea.



The subject to which I would like to call your attention at this moment is very close to your sensibility. I would like, in fact, to linger with you to look again at the marvelous scene which the mystery of Christmas put before our eyes. It is a scene that is familiar to you: many of you have relived it actively in these days, constructing a crib in your homes. Well, among the protagonists of this scene, I call on you this morning to look at Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother.

The Church itself suggests to us this particular attention for the Blessed Virgin: it willed that the last day of the octave of Christmas and the first day of the new year should be dedicated to celebration of Mary's motherhood. The intention to highlight the "place" of the Mother, I would say the "motherly dimension" of the whole mystery of the human birth of God, is, therefore, evident.

2. This is not an intention that is manifested only on this day. The Church's veneration for the Madonna — a veneration that surpasses the cult of every other saint and takes the name of "hyperdulia" — invests the whole liturgical year. March 25 is the day on which the moment of the Annunciation, that is, the incarnation of the eternal Word in the Virgin's pure womb, is recalled. From that day up to Dec. 25, it can be said that the Church discreetly but with deep awareness, walks with Mary, living with her the expectancy of every mother: expectancy of the birth, expectancy of Christmas. And at the same time, during this period, Mary "walks" with the Church. Her motherly expectancy is inscribed, in a quiet but very real way, in the life of the Church throughout the year. What happened between Nazareth, Ain Karin and Bethlehem, is the subject of the liturgy of the Church,



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of its prayer — especially the prayer of the Rosary — and of its contemplation.

3. Everything begins with the conversation between the Virgin and the Archangel Gabriel: "How shall this be since I have no husband?" (Luke 1:34). Answer: "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 called holy, the Son of God." (Luke 1:35). At the same time as physical motherhood, Mary's spiritual motherhood began, a motherhood which filled the nine months of waiting,

but which was prolonged also beyond the moment of the birth of Jesus to embrace the 30 years spent between Bethlehem, Egypt and Nazareth, and then also the years of Jesus' public life, when the Son of Mary left his home in Nazareth to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom: years which culminated in the events of Calvary and in the supreme sacrifice on the Cross.

It was just here, under the Cross, that Mary's spiritual motherhood reached its key-moment, in a certain sense. "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son.'" (John 19:26). Thus Jesus linked Mary, his mother, in a new way with man; with man, to whom he had given the Gospel.

Jesus linked her, then, with every man, as he united her, subsequently, with the Church, on the day of its historic birth, that is the day of Pentecost. From that day, the whole Church had her as Mother, and all men have her as Mother. They understand the words spoken from the Cross, as addressed to each of them. Spiritual motherhood knows no limits; it extends in time and in space, and reaches all human hearts. It reaches whole nations and becomes the keystone of human culture. Motherhood: a great, splendid, fundamental human reality, present at the beginning of time in the Creator's plan, solemnly reconfirmed in the mystery of the Birth of God, with which it now remains inseparably linked.

4. I wish to exhort you, dear boys and girls, to love your mothers; accept her teachings and follow her example. A reflection of the sweetness, intuition, and generosity of Mary can be glimpsed on the face of every mother. Honoring your mother, you also honor her who, being Christ's mother, is also the mother of each of us.

I wish to remind girls, in particular, that motherhood is woman's vocation: it was yesterday, it is today, it will be always; it is her eternal vocation. There come to my mind the words of a song of my country. These say that a mother is the one who understands everything and embraces each of us with her heart. And they add that today the world is "hungrier and thirstier" than ever for that motherhood which, physically or spiritually, is woman's vocation, as it was Mary's.

My prayer is that today, too, the dignity of the mother will be recognized and protected in the family and in society. It will depend above all on you young people, if this happens in the world of tomorrow. Endeavor at once to look at your mothers with the eyes with which Jesus looked at his. Let her, the Virgin Mother, who is our hope, herself help you in this your resolution.

## More Opinions

### His Views Of Happiness

Editor:

Happiness is: Being the freest of men. Having an open mind! Being mature! Happiness is in the knowledge and practice of authentic Catholic faith!

Many "Catholics," most conspicuously some priests and nuns, say, "I believe all that Jesus stands for and gladly say 'yes' to Him. But it's necessary to have an open mind (i.e. 'Does the Church Want Phonies?' Courier-Journal 12-13-78). I can't always agree with the Church since it is an organization of men nor with the Pope since he too is only a man."

Their objections are understandable and might appear reasonable since all the members of the Church are sinners. However, the Church remains Holy — to be revered — because Jesus Christ is Her head. One cannot separate Jesus from His members, saying "yes" to the head but "no" to His

Church, to His Mystical Body.

As head of His Church, Jesus Christ teaches, through divine revelation, that a free rational obedience of His magisterium is the reference for determining one's love of God and neighbor.

Happiness is: Being free from the bondage of faith in worldly reasonings; being free to say "yes" and to teach the truth of Church doctrines such as *Humanae Vitae*, and the theological obstacles against ordination of women to the priesthood; being free to wear a religious habit to publicly proclaim God's Holy Presence.

Happiness is: seeing that human knowledge (even the so-called "exact sciences") is composed of beliefs without a rock foundation — "Physical concepts are free creations of the human mind, and are not, however it may seem, uniquely determined by the physical world" (Albert Einstein). Happiness is wisdom in knowing that Jesus Christ is the only rock foundation for belief (Matt. 7:13-27)!

Happiness is: child-like humility and complete confidence in the Person Jesus; gratitude to our Father for His gift of Catholic faith; in which we can mature as the children of God — the freest of men!

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### Why Revive Old Hatred?

Editor:

"Everyone is evil except me and thee, and I have doubts about thee."

According to Father Greeley's Jan. 17 column, dark deeds are afoot in the land where there is an anti-religious conspiracy to subvert Catholicism in America. That ought to pick up his Neilson rating, since Mark Lane and others have found gold in spinning conspiracy theories, however far-fetched.

Father Greeley appears to yearn for the good old

days of the APA and discrimination against Catholics which gave us that good feeling of "ghetto solidarity" when we were the good guys who had to stick together to defend ourselves against the bad guys, which implied most non-Catholics.

Revising the old hatred against non-Catholics, he now wants to add to his enemies list Joseph Califano and other Catholics with whom he disagrees, including members of the Bishops' staff.

His labeling Mr. Califano a turncoat reminds me of the capitalists who charged that the wealthy Franklin Roosevelt was a traitor to his class for approving liberal legislation that gave a measure of social justice to workers, the elderly, the poor and the unemployed.

Instead of opposing teachers' unions, the Church's responsibility to promote social justice should be to publicly demand that working people be paid wages that will enable them to pay parochial school tuition, rather than demanding

money from non-Catholic taxpayers.

The burden to prove entitlement to tax-exemption is upon the schools under the laws governing the IRS. Where do you suppose all those white Catholics went, when they left South Boston's public schools?

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### Ask Prayers For Guidance

Editor:

This is a public request for prayer support according to the promise of II Chronicles, 7:14: "And if my people, upon whom my name has been pronounced, humble themselves and pray, and seek my presence and turn from their evil ways, I will hear them from heaven and pardon their sins and revive their land."

Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency has taken up the matter of teenage pregnancy as a health problem. Many of the agency's members say that more sex education is the answer. The agency is considering the en-

dorsement of a program produced by Planned Parenthood of Rochester. The program, while containing vital and necessary information, is slanted according to a philosophy of life alien to the way taught us by our Lord, Jesus.

Please present this matter to our Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus, as the Holy Spirit leads you. We at St. Mary's on the Southside of Elmira have been praying individually and during the petitions at Mass. We are also sharing our Christian thinking with those in authority and with people in general. We hope to greatly expand our outreach to our own youth in matters of morality. Out of compassion for our youth, we wish for them to come to a firm conviction that "you reap what you sow."

I write this letter as a representative of a group of concerned citizens — many of whom are communicants of St. Mary's Church.

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