

Upcoming Events

Sunday, May 6

First

Holy Communion

Sunday, May 13

May Procession

With Living Rosary

Sunday, May 27

Feast of Pentecost

Confirmation

**The Holy Father's
general intention
for the month of
May 2007:**

That, allowing himself to be enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit, every Christian may answer enthusiastically and faithfully to the universal call to sanctity.

Faith Formation

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

MAY 2007

To Jesus through Mary

By Lisa M. Gulino

I grew up in the shadow of Our Lady's Shrine of LaSalette in Attleboro, Massachusetts. In hindsight I can see that the Blessed Mother has always had a special role in my life and has been a part of my walk with Jesus our Lord. My devotion started at a young age. Many Sundays I went with my dad to the Shrine to pray the "holy steps". It happened that my younger sister Carol was born with Spina Bifida and she was often critically ill. Dad and I would go to the Shrine where we climbed the fifty concrete steps on our knees, praying a Hail Mary on each step. It is an image of my dad that I will never forget. On his knees, Rosary in hand, slowly (and yes with some discomfort!) moving from one step to the next humbly beseeching God's choicest bless-

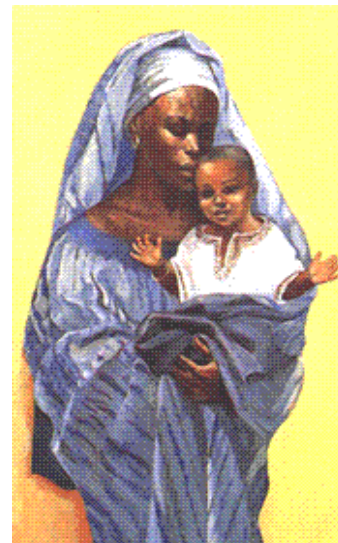
ings upon his family and especially his sick daughter. By his witness, my dad taught me to place the intentions, the cares and burdens, the hopes and dreams of my heart

him through Mary's powerful intercession. The wisdom of dad's words came to light much later as I began to seek Jesus in my own life and to study the Faith.

With Mary's Faith

Going to Jesus through Mary, **with her faith**, and **in her love** for the Son she bore helps us to see Christ more clearly. A living relationship with Mary helps us to **see with her eyes**, to hear Jesus—who is the Word—**with her ears** and to love him who is the gift of the Father **with her heart**.

In our Catholic devotions we have a wonderful tool to recount the key moments of Christ's saving acts. This devotion is the Rosary. The saintly devotee



into the hands of the Mother of God.

I remember Dad telling me that God could come to us in any way God so chose and he chose to come to us through Mary. He also explained that we could imitate Jesus by going to

(continued on page 4)

Through
the
Holy Spirit
we are
restored to
paradise,
led back to
the Kingdom
of heaven,
and adopted
as children,
given
confidence to
call God
our Father
and to share
in Christ's
grace,
called children
of light and
given a share
in eternal
glory."
CCC 736

Question of the Week

by Lisa M. Gulino

To help us as a community to prayerfully reflect on the Word of God, we would encourage you individually, as a family, with friends or at the beginning of your meetings to read the appropriate Scriptures and then reflect upon the Word in light of these questions.

May 6 **Jn 13: 31-35** *In today's Gospel Jesus speaks of his going and gives a new commandment: "Love one another. Such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for one other." In faith we know that Jesus remains with us in his Eucharistic presence. We call the Eucharist the "memorial of the love with which he loves us.." How do we, personally, within our family, and with our fellow parishioners live this command of love? How do we prepare for the gift and Sacrament of the Eucharist?*

May 13 **Jn 14: 3-29** *Jesus prepares his Apostles for his leaving, promises them peace and the help of the Holy Spirit. "Anyone who loves me will be true to my word, and my Father will love him; we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him always." The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) says that the Holy Spirit is the first to awaken faith in us and to communicate to us new life, which is to know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ." (684) Reflect upon the reality that we are Temples of the Holy Spirit. How does it change the way we live and act knowing that the Trinity dwells within us?*

May 20 **Lk 24-46-53** **Ascension of the Lord** *Jesus prays, "Father, all those you gave I would have in my company where I am, to see this glory of mine which is your gift to me, because of the love you bore me before the world began." Jesus tells us of his desire for us to be with him where he will be"...in another verse in the Gospel Jesus said that he "goes to prepare a place". The CCC says: "Left to its own natural powers humanity does not have access to the Father's house, to God's life and happiness. Only Christ can open to man such access that we, his members, might have confidence that we too shall go where he ...has preceded us." (661) Jesus gives us the Sacraments in order that we might have union with Him and the grace to live his two fold commandment of love, love of God and love of neighbor. How do the Sacraments, especially the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation aide you in your journey? How are you called to live out a sacramental life personally, with your family and with your faith community?*

May 27 **Jn 14:15-16, 23-26** **Pentecost** *"...Jesus came and stood before them. "Peace be with you" he said. When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. At the sight of the Lord the disciples rejoice. ... As the Father has sent me so I send you. Then he breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound." Jesus grants us all good things namely: peace, the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus shows his wounds then offers the gift of peace. Discuss the wounds of Christ and how it is through his wounds we were healed and our sins forgiven. How might we better deepen our everyday awareness of Jesus' loving, healing, forgiving presence?*

FAITH FORMATION

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Month of May

How rich is the month of May! The month opens with the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1st. The feast day recalls that Joseph, the Foster Father of Jesus and the Husband of Mary provided for the Holy Family by the work of his hands. Thus we celebrate also the dignity of work.

On May 13th we recall the **first apparition of Mary at Fatima**. The spirit of Fatima can be summarized as: the call to do penance for the Church, for the sanctification of priests, for the conversion all people in serious sin, and for peace in the world. This day is also the **Feast of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament**. We recall that Mary, as she carried the Incarnate Word in her womb, carried the One who is God. She then, is the Tabernacle of the Lord, the Ark of the Covenant. Who knows better how to live in the Divine Presence of the Lord. Let us ask her to be with us as we prepare our hearts, minds and souls to

receive the Eucharist.

Sunday, May 20th, we celebrate the **Ascension of the Lord** in Heaven. Here we see Jesus receive the glory that is his. He became man like us in all things except sin. Let us recall that in Jesus' humanity we already share in the glory and the triumph over sin and death.

Sunday, May 27th we celebrate the **Feast of Pentecost**, the sending of the Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of the love between the Father and the Son. The gift of the Spirit "ushers in a new era...the age of the Church during which Christ manifests, makes present, and communicates his work of salvation through the liturgy of his Church "until he comes again." (CCC 736) Simply stated, *Pentecost is the birthday of the Church*. It is the day that Peter, head of the Church, bursts forth from the Upper Room (the Apostles were gathered around Mary praying for the Paraclete), anointed by the Spirit and proclaims salva-

tion and the forgiveness of sins. The crowd cried out, "what must we do?", Peter answered, "be baptized."

Let us pray with Mary that the Spirit of God falls afresh on us here at Holy Comforter-St. Cyprian. Pray the Spirit's flame enkindles anew the fire of love in the local Church, the Archdiocese of Washington and that the gifts of the Holy Spirit be poured out on the Universal Church. *"Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your life. Come and renew the face of the earth!"*

We remember all our First Communicants and our young people who will receive Confirmation. *Mary Spouse of the Spirit...pray for us*. Let the fire of God's love fall!



Candle Light Store



Over the next several weeks watch for new merchandise and especially the addition of new books. Check out the beautiful selection of Bibles which are now here. These can make great Confirmation gifts.

(Located in the rear of the church. Open during Mass times.)

To Jesus Through Mary (cont'd pg. 1)

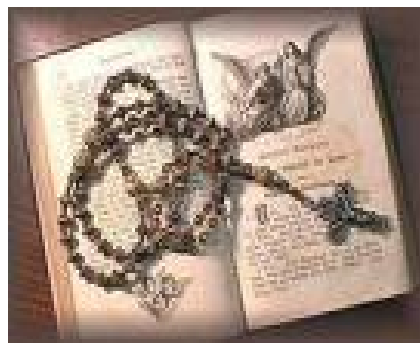
of the Blessed Mother, Pope John Paul II, calls the Rosary “a compendium of the Gospel”, “a sweet chain that links us to God”, and “a treasure to be re-discovered.”

The Rosary, though Marian in character is Christ-centered and contains within it the core of the Gospel message. The structure of the Rosary contains the “symbol of the faith” (better known as the Creed), the Lord’s Prayer, and the scriptural prayer which is the Hail Mary. The body of the Hail Mary can be found in the Gospel of Luke composed from two stories—The Annunciation and The Visitation. The “Glory Be” prayer is the praise of the Holy Trinity which is found in the letters of St. Paul.

Pope John Paul stated that when we pray the Rosary we “sit at the school of Mary” and are lead to contemplate the beauty of Christ’s face. It is through this contemplation of Christ’s face and a recalling of his salvific actions on our behalf that we experience the depth of his love and receive abundant grace as though “through the hands of Mary the Mother of the Redeemer.” The life of the Christian disciple calls us to contemplate the face of Christ,

to gaze upon the splendor of his glory. **This spirit of contemplation in fact is the task of every Christian.** St. Paul writes, “Beholding the glory of God, we are being changed into his likeness, from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Corth. 3:18)

Mary is the model of contemplating Christ’s face and his glory. Through the joyful, luminous, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of the lives of



Jesus and Mary it is she who gazes, who ponders, who keeps “all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:19). The Fathers of the Church would often proclaim that it is Mary who first conceived Christ in her heart through faith and then in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit. With the **eyes of her heart**, Mary gazed upon the eternal Son become man in her womb. **In**

adoration she gazed upon her newborn’s face and beheld the face of God. With a **hope-filled gaze** she trusted he heard the needs of the couple at Cana. With a **look of sorrow** she beheld the suffering and contorted face of her Son on the Cross. How radiant must her own face have been when she once again beheld her Son, her Risen Son on that glorious Easter morn!

The Church, in times of crisis and discord has turned to prayer, especially the prayer of the Rosary. Pope John Paul, shortly before his death commended to the faithful the prayer of the Rosary as an instrument for peace. He stated that the Rosary, by its very nature is a prayer for peace since it consists in the contemplation of Christ who is the Prince of Peace. John Paul writes, “Any one who assimilates the mystery of Christ, and this is clearly the goal of the Rosary—learns the secret of peace and makes it his life’s project.”

Let us re-dedicate ourselves to praying the Rosary and thus gaze upon the peaceful countenance of Christ. Let us entrust the peace of the world to Jesus through Mary!