

Mary Always Remembers You

By T. N. JORGENSEN, S.J.

GOOD morning, Mary!"

"Good morning, Mother!"

How often these words were repeated with love by Jesus and Joseph in Galilee. What joy it is to live with a perfect woman. "As the rising sun brings glory to the heavens, so does the beauty of a good woman bring glory to her house." God has placed a good woman in His house on earth, the Church. Mary, Mother of the Church, dwells with us.

"Ave, Maria!" "Hail, Mary!"

How often through the centuries this greeting of Gabriel has been repeated. Millions of Aves daily give testimony that Mary still dwells with us. The simple act of greeting is an act of faith and hope and love all in one. It lifts our thoughts to heaven and the spiritual world, and brings God's grace flowing into our souls.

But this greeting should be only the beginning of a new fullness of spiritual life. One does not say "hello" to a close friend and then ignore him for the rest of the time that they are together. Fortunately we can speak to Mary through our thoughts without forming any words with our tongue. This makes it possible to turn to her often to discuss our plans, hopes, and fears - while sitting in silence on a crowded bus or walking or waiting or resting.

The day is full of moments when we can whisper mentally, "Which way shall I do this work, Mary?" "How would you handle this problem?" "Bless this act that I may do your will in your way." "Help me to act now as Jesus would act here." This kind of living up to our belief in Mary's presence and protection makes our earthly exile bearable and our salvation sure.

A FRIEND AT HAND

Without a friend at hand, our dearest delights pall quickly. With a charming and capable and loving friend to share our hours, time speeds along happily. True growth in grace brings many joys, one of which is a growing consciousness of the wonderful presence of Mary, the perfect friend.

Of course Mary is not present visibly, but that does not mean that she is not truly present. Our guardian angel is not present visibly; but if we have been devoted to him, we know of his constant care. God our Father is not present bodily, either here or in heaven, but no one is closer than He to the souls which He created and preserves and loves. When St. Teresa was in ecstasy, she was so intimately united to God that she could not distinguish for the moment which was God and which herself, but He was not visibly present. So visible presence is not necessary for the full, conscious presence of God; nor is it necessary for Mary, who through her special union with Him shares uniquely in His power.

FULLNESS OF PRESENCE

Let us consider the true nature of a fully conscious presence. Its first essential quality is knowledge. If three people are in a room and two are talking in a language which the third does not understand; if three people attend a football game and two know all the rules and the third does not; if three people go to a movie and one is blind, or three go to an opera and one is deaf, or three go to class and one is absentminded or falls asleep - the third party in each of these cases, while visibly present, is not present in any full way because of his lack of knowledge of what is going on.

Power is the second essential quality of fullness of presence. If three people go to a polling place and two are citizens and the third is not and cannot vote; if three go to Mass and two are Catholics and receive Communion and the third is not and cannot; if three go to an American Legion dance and two are members and dance and the third is not and cannot; if three go to a meeting in the Senate and two are Senators and talk and vote and the third is not and cannot - in these and countless other cases the third, while present visibly and having some knowledge of what is going on, is not fully present because of his lack of power to share in the activity.

Love is the third essential quality of presence. If our son or brother or best friend is playing football, we are likely to see him at every play and not notice the others. A mother can walk into the nursery of a hospital and be conscious of only one baby of the many there. A young man just engaged can be jostled by a crowd of hundreds and be conscious only of the girl at his side. A willing, conscious, active attention to a person is what makes us most fully present to him, and love is the greatest spur to this attention.

NO HANDICAP TO MARY

Power, knowledge, and love are the three qualities that make up a fully conscious presence. We over-emphasize visible presence in our thoughts because in most of our experiences we have to be visibly present before we can have power, knowledge, and love; and so we naturally - but wrongly-think that visible presence and these qualities are essentially connected.

The veil between Mary and us might be compared to one-way glass. Some large stores have a detective sitting inside a pillar made of such glass. He can see all that is going on in the aisles outside, but the customers have no idea that he is there. If he sees a theft or fire or anything else wrong, he has but to telephone to his companion at the desk and action takes place at once. But Mary is really much closer to us than is the glass-enclosed detective to the customers. For the veil between her and us is no handicap to her at all, for she has a great fullness of the knowledge and power and love which we have just considered.

MARY'S KNOWLEDGE OF US

She has exceptional knowledge of each of us because of her special fullness of the beatific vision. This vision reveals to each one of the blessed whatever they need to know to make their heavenly happiness perfect. Through Mary's union with God as His Mother, through her place in the Incarnation and Redemption, and through her position as Mediatrix of grace, she deserves and needs to know our lives fully if she is to fulfil all of her duties and desires adequately. God has made her our Queen and our Mother and gives her the fullness of knowledge which is needed to fulfil these offices becomingly.

Let us pause a moment to consider what the word "becomingly" means here. And what is said of it in regard to Mary's knowledge holds, too, in regard to her power and love.

God might have become Mary's son without consulting her, for He is absolute master of all others in all ways. But through Gabriel He told her His plans and asked and awaited her free consent before He assumed flesh of her flesh that with it He might redeem the world. At that time Mary was still a wayfarer on earth. Nevertheless, God treated her with love and consideration, filling her with an abundance of grace to understand and co-operate intelligently, freely, and lovingly in His great plan of redemption. The work of applying the fruits of the redemption continues, and Mary's co-operation continues. Surely God grants as much consideration to the Queen of Heaven as He did to the girl of Galilee, and He still gives her grace to co-operate intelligently. A mother who spends the salary of her husband intelligently to run their mutual home must carefully consider all the needs, future as well as present, of each of her children. Mary, to be the perfect Mother of the Mystical Body of Christ and dispenser of His grace, needs to know immeasurably more about us than we, or our best friends, on earth can ever know.

GRACE AND HER POWER

Power, the second essential quality of fullness of presence, is Mary's in an unusual degree because she dispenses God's grace. Without grace we cannot merit heaven, advance in holiness, help any soul, or perform any act pleasing to God in the spiritual world. Grace, then, is most necessary for us at every moment, and all graces come to us through Mary. Nor is she merely a blind channel through which grace flows as water might flow through a lifeless pipe. Mary's humble Annunciation fiat brought Christ, the source of all our graces: to earth. Her co-operation brings that grace to each of us. She is still God's loving handmaid doing His will in all things, but now she enjoys an even fuller knowledge and love as she and the Spirit, her Spouse, work together to foster the Christ-life in each of our souls.

All through the hours of every day Mary offers us the grace we need at that particular moment. She offers it wisely, knowing just why and how we need it. She offers it lovingly, her love for God and her

love for us uniting to make her generous in helping us live Christ's life, the life with which she herself lived and lives. Each opportunity and inspiration we have to suffer for God, to overcome our selfishness, to practise any virtue whatsoever it be, is a clear sign to us that Mary is actively helping us. Each time that we fail to use a grace, we fail her; each time that we do use one, we delight her. Our lives are wrapped up in hers most intimately at every moment.

OUR MOTHER'S LOVE

Mary has the love. Even a brief discussion of this thought would take much space. There is no need, however, for such development here, for a mother's love is one thing that all understand, and Mary is truly our loyal Mother. Through her Annunciation fiat, her offering of Christ in the temple and on Calvary, and her active co-operation at our Baptism, she has given us supernatural life. She co-operates in our supernatural birth and growth as our earthly mothers co-operate in our natural birth and growth, though in both cases the ultimate source of life is God. We do not speak figuratively but truly and exactly, therefore, when we say that Mary is our Mother. And since our supernatural life is greatly superior to our natural life, Mary is much closer to us than even our natural mothers are.

In God's plans the lower things are intended to serve the higher. Our physical life is rightly subject to our spiritual life, for if our souls are in grace at death even our bodies shall be glorious eternally. But if our souls are without grace, our bodies, too, will suffer miserably in hell. God, in giving Mary, all the gifts she needs to mother our spiritual life successfully, also gives her all the power she needs over physical things. War, for instance, may be the occasion of spiritual loss or gain to many of Mary's children; hence we are not surprised that she has the power implied by her words at Fatima: "If the people do these things, I will grant peace to the world."

Love is a spiritual thing which is not hampered by numbers. A mother who loves her first child with her whole heart does not love it less when she is blessed with more children. Love is a gift from God and His power is infinite. Through God's grace Mary loves each of us individually, consciously, personally, at all times, as fully and completely and intensely as if each of us were her only child. This is strictly true. Just as Christ her Son died for each of us as fully as if we were the only one for whom He died, so Mary, who offered Him to that death for each of us and who has free access to God's infinite resources, knows and helps and loves each of us as fully as if each were her only child. As Pope Pius XII wrote, "Mary hears the voice of Jesus saying to her of each of us, as He once said to her of His beloved disciple, 'Behold thy son'."

MARY HELPS US

God the Father loves us beyond our comprehension; His greatest manifestation of this love is the bloody sacrifice of His eternal Son on Calvary for our salvation. Mary offered the same Son to the same death for the same intention at the same hour. She was wholly at one with her Son in making this tremendous sacrifice for us. She did this when she was still a wayfarer on earth. Now that she is confirmed in grace in an added way by the beatific vision, she loves us no less. It belittles her love for Christ to think that she would hesitate to give us anything else that would help us after she has given us Christ, and after she has formed Christ again in the soul of each of us.

At every moment there are souls who reject Mary's loving help; we can atone for these insults to our Mother by offering to her the work, the worry, the weariness of every hour with patient, even joyful, abandonment to her care. We will never be sinful or fearful or lonely or selfish or sad when we vividly recall that the wonderful Mary walks with us at every step we take. Nor will that sense of futility which burdens many today have any place in the heart of one who remembers that his every action is blessed by her powerful love and grace.

God wishes us to discover Mary as fully as we can. He became incarnate not only to redeem us and show us His love, but also to give us an example. And at the very moment of the Incarnation He gave us the example of complete union with Mary. He placed Himself and His work as fully in her trust as He could. The beautiful Marian road to heaven was conceived and built and blessed by God Himself. The best way of discovering His abiding presence is by discovering Mary's. He comes to each soul through her.

“INSPIRED BY THE CERTAINTY”

Of course we know all this through faith and not through vision. But we live by faith habitually; it is natural and easy for us. We have a human faith when we believe and rely upon others around us, as we have to do constantly through every day. And faith in God and in God's words and plans is far safer; indeed, it is absolutely certain since we know that He has never deceived or been deceived. As the pope's Assumption prayer reminds us, we are “inspired by the certainty” that Mary's eyes are turned toward us. We are taught by God's own Church that we can turn to Mary at any time of the day or night, knowing that she hears our prayer instantly and has the power and love to grant us the answer that will be the best for us.

Faith is a very important virtue, for it opens the door to a new and wonderful world. Through faith we know many things about God and heaven and our souls that are far beyond the dim light of reason. And every article of faith taught by the Church has God's guarantee, for Christ has promised to be “with it all days” to protect it from error.

INCREASE OF FAITH

Through faith we know that this is truly God's world by the double right of creation and redemption. His control is absolute, but He shares it generously with Mary because of her generous sharing in His redemptive sacrifice. Our faith assures us of their constant loving guidance. But faith can have many degrees; its growth clarifies much of its implicit teachings. We can increase our faith by prayer, study, and fidelity to the Church. Recalling that Christ said to Thomas, “You believe because you have seen; more blessed is he who has not seen and yet believes,” we will be encouraged to try to increase our faith. Saying, “I believe; O Mary, help me to believe more firmly,” will increase our faith in Mary and in all of the Church's teachings.

But, perhaps, we have always believed firmly that Mary is watching over us at all times with a mother's love; and yet have forgotten about her under the stress of daily life. How can we help our memory and our wavering will that we may live up to the wonderful fact of her constant care? What can we do to understand it more fully and appreciate it with all the loving gratitude that God desires?

CONSECRATION TO MARY

One of the best means is to consecrate ourselves entirely to Mary, then to study what this consecration means, and daily or oftener renew both the consecration and the effort to live up to it. One simple but adequate form of consecration is:

“My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to you. I consecrate to you today my eyes, my ears, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Wherefore, good Mother, as I belong to you, preserve me, defend me as your property and possession.”

This consecration can be renewed often and quickly with the opening words, “My Queen, I give myself entirely to you.”

Many writings are available which give the reasons for such a consecration and the advantages which come from it; the pages which follow will discuss how we can live up to it and thereby remember Mary's presence.

PRAYER AND PRACTICE

The first means is prayer. Living in Mary's presence through fidelity to our consecration to her is a spiritual activity utterly beyond our merely natural powers. We must co-operate with grace through the use of natural means, but we must place our trust primarily in Mary's own help. Prayer to her is an actual practice of belief in her presence, for praying to her shows that we believe she hears us and has the power and love to answer us. Prayer will be the chief support of all the other means which follow.

The second means, and one which, like prayer, really accompanies all the others, is practice. Practice means that we live up to our belief. How would we feel and act now if our faith in Mary's active presence were very deep and strong? If we act thus, it will become deep and strong. By deliberate effort we can train our emotions and actions to follow a certain line. If we often act or think or speak in a certain way

because we know that this is the way one who deeply appreciated Mary's presence would act or think or speak, we are certain to develop a deep appreciation of her presence.

AVOIDING SIN

The third means is the second one stated negatively: avoid sin. If we are in earnest in offering our eyes and ears and mouth and heart to Mary each morning, we will be ashamed to use these very gifts to offend her during the day. If we are tempted to look at dangerous things, we refrain with the prayers, "Help me, Mary, for my eyes belong to you." If we are tempted to speak unkindly we say, "Mary, remember my tongue is your charge as well as mine; help me to curb it." When wayward images come to our minds or sinful emotions to our hearts, we resist with the prayer, "Mary, my mind is yours, my heart is yours. Help me to control them more fully that I may truly give them entirely to you."

If we avoid sin because of Mary's presence and her abhorrence of sin, her presence becomes more deeply impressed upon our consciousness. This is true for psychological reasons. But sin is always the rejection of grace and grace is absolutely necessary for growth in this supernatural activity of living in Mary's presence. For this reason, too, we must avoid all deliberate sin if we wish to grow in this virtue.

The wrong kind of fear, doubt, or sadness should be avoided. The presence of a deeply loved friend has great power to overcome depression. Deliberate submission to melancholy can be sinful; and even if our sadness is not sinful, it might readily imply that our consciousness of Mary's loving care is not very deep, or at least is not active at the moment.

NEW AND GLORIOUS VALUE

Prayerful consideration of the values of this consecration will help us to live up to it. These pages cannot take space to treat all the advantages of this consecration, but as the fourth means of living up to it we will consider this one: Our consecration gives all of our actions a new and glorious value which they did not have before.

Consecration makes a thing sacred. Our consecration brings us a greater share of the royalty of Jesus and Mary and lets Christ's power impregnate our actions. Our power in the spiritual world is measured by three things only: the possession of sanctifying grace that our actions may have Christ's power flowing into them; the right intention that we may be working for Christ's purposes; and the actual effort by which we use the many actual graces given us and make the right intention real rather than mere wishful dreaming. And the final one of "effort" means just that: it means effort and not external success which may or may not follow from that effort.

AN ELEVATED PLANE

We may be poor, sick, untrained, untalented; but in becoming consciously and gladly one with Mary, we are lifted to a plane where our actions become potent for spiritual good for the same reasons and in the same way that Mary's were so when she lived on earth.

During many hours she swept, dusted, carried water, sewed, cooked, washed dishes or clothes. But these ordinary actions were very profitable for the kingdom of God, for they were done in obedience to God's wish, done by one habitually using His grace, done by one eager to show her love for Him. Suppose on some day Mary was unable to do a task and hired a servant to do it. This woman might go to the same well with the same jar and bring back the same amount of water that Mary had carried the day before. But that would not mean that she gave the same glory to God by the act. It was the divine life within Mary that made her acts so powerful for good.

God loves Mary with a greatness which we cannot fathom, for she is His masterpiece, Queen and Mother of His own eternal home. This love for her overflows to her children who are united to her, just as God's love for Christ overflows to us who share in Christ's merits. And Christ's love flows to us from His Sacred Heart with a special fullness when our hearts are fully at one with the Immaculate Heart of His Mother.

READING FOR MARY

Spiritual reading is a fifth means ready to help us live our consecration to Mary. There are many splendid pamphlets, magazines, and books being published today about Mary and her place in our life.* Our reading should be sympathetic, intelligent, prayerful, and persevering. A sympathetic reader tries to recapture in his own heart the enthusiasm which stirred the author into writing. An intelligent reader concentrates on the things which are important for him, and takes steps to use them at once in his life. Prayer is necessary because abundant grace is necessary for a deep understanding of spiritual truths. Perseverance is necessary because valuable and long-lasting things grow slowly.

Association, a fundamental law of the memory, is a sixth help for remembering and living our consecration to Mary. It is easy to associate our Marian thoughts with each of our spiritual exercises. As we say our Morning Offering, we can let the words "Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer thee all . . ." be a daily renewal of our act of consecration. At the Offertory of any Mass which we attend, we can offer all our acts of the day to God through Mary in union with the sacrifice of the Mass. If we belong to a Sodality, the Legion of Mary, the Scapular Confraternity, the Blue Army, etc., it is easy to utilize all of these to foster thoughts about the presence of Mary and help us to live up to our act of consecration.

Associating this act of consecration with our Rosary, in particular, brings us great help. Perhaps that is why Mary at Fatima urged the saying of the Rosary together with consecration to her Immaculate Heart, and why the Pope urges both with equal earnestness. The Rosary in revealing the mysteries of Christ's life and death, reveals His and Mary's conquest of sin and Satan, and tells us how to join them in this victory. And when sin and Satan have been ejected fully from our hearts and Christ and Mary lovingly accepted there, we are living our consecration as it should be lived.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

Suppose we go through the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary with the thought of our consecration in mind to see how the two work together.

THE ANNUNCIATION. God willingly becomes Mary's son forever. By our consecration we, too, willingly choose Mary for our Mother forever. Our act so closely imitates God's example at the Incarnation that St. Louis de Montfort chooses the Annunciation feast as the best day of the year for making, or formally renewing, our complete consecration to Mary.

THE VISITATION. Now that God is Mary's son, He works with her and through her. He wishes to visit John the Baptist and inspires Mary to carry Him there. It is at Mary's salutation that Christ purifies John of original sin and gives Elizabeth the gift of prophecy. After our consecration we, like Christ, perform all our works, especially our apostolic ones, with and through Mary.

THE NATIVITY. Before the Incarnation, Mary loved God as her God. Now a new note has been added to her love as she feeds, clothes, and bathes the divine Infant. She loves Him as her God; she loves Him also as her son. After our consecration there is a new fullness of love for us in Mary's heart. The tender care which she showed for Christ in Bethlehem is renewed again as she fosters the same Christ-life in each of us who has followed His example and lovingly surrendered ourselves wholly to her.

THE PRESENTATION. The Second Person of the Trinity gave Himself to Mary as her child that she might offer Him to the Father. We give ourselves to her for exactly the same reason. Mary offers us, her other children, to the Father. God blesses our works more abundantly henceforth because they come to Him through Mary and in union with the works of Christ.

* *The article entitled "Know Your Mother Better", by Stanley Mathews, S.M. (n. 26. Marian Reprints, Marian Library, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio), gives and discusses an exceptionally fine list of Marian books.*

THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE. Mary was unhappy without Christ and sought Him until she found Him. She will guide us to the same goal, leading us to search until our hearts rest in God who alone can satisfy them. It was her duty and honour and pleasure to watch faithfully over the Christ Child; it is her duty and honour and pleasure now to watch as faithfully over us. She will seek us with eager love if we ever go astray. In watching over us she is indeed finding and fostering the Christ-life again in each of us.

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

As we say the Sorrowful Mysteries, we might recall that this is Mary's son suffering in the body which she gave Him. He is suffering for Mary; indeed she is the first and most perfect fruit of the redemption. He is suffering with Mary; they are fully united in their complete submission to the will of the Father. We will profit most from our sufferings if we endure them in union with Christ's and Mary's pains and offer them for Christ's and Mary's intentions. Through the Communion of Saints it is a fact that Christ and Mary are with us in our suffering, and the divine life which they foster within us gives our trials a value far beyond anything our unaided human nature could ever expect. Since our present life of exile is primarily a life of testing and purification, it is especially important to recall and renew our consecration and union with Mary in times of trial.

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

As we say the Glorious Mysteries, we see the great triumph and glory which Christ and Mary have gained for themselves and for all our race. The more fully we are at one with them, the more fully we shall partake of this glorious victory. Our consecration, therefore, promises us a special abundance of glory through all eternity.

Besides reminding us of our consecration to Mary and of her active presence in all of our works, the Rosary can help us to understand more fully the wonderful personality of this woman who walks with us. We can think with each mystery of the special virtue Mary shows in that mystery, such as her humility at the Annunciation, her zeal at the Visitation, etc. Or we can think about the delight which her company must have brought to those around her - to the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation, to Elizabeth and John and Zachary at the Visitation, etc. Or we can take some virtue which we admire or need, and see how she reveals it through all of the mysteries,

ADAPTABILITY

For instance, a spontaneous adaptability which enables us to fit in gladly with all of God's plans for us is a rare and appealing and highly useful virtue. Mary reveals it. She had vowed virginity and prepared for a childless life, but at the Annunciation she accepts a radical change in accepting a child, and a divine child at that, without any upsetting excitement or confusion. Mary, as Luke tells us, liked to ponder over things in quiet seclusion. Yet the Visitation shows her going in haste to serve Elizabeth at the very moment when she has Divinity Itself beneath her heart to meditate upon. At the Nativity she has only a stable for shelter, but provides or improvises swaddling clothes and transforms a manger into a crib.

Nothing seems to disturb her, not even the opposite things of living in a stable and welcoming the Magi. She retires peacefully to the shadows during Christ's public life; she stands bravely on the top of Calvary before the hostile crowds when it comes time to offer her son to the Father. Adaptability grows harder as we grow older, but Mary, as the Glorious Mysteries remind us, started a brand new life when Christ ascended to heaven and left her behind for many years to mother the infant Church.

THE BLUE OF FIDELITY

Thus we see that associating these pages with our daily spiritual exercises, especially the Rosary, will be very helpful. But even non-spiritual things can help us to remember and appreciate Mary. Her special colour is blue, and blue has long been associated with fidelity. If we are on the watch for it, we will see blue things about us often during the day. Each time that we see blue, it can remind us that Mary is "true-blue," that she is called the Virgin Most Faithful, that she never failed Christ and will never fail us.

God Himself, thousands of years ago, used blue symbolically to urge men to be faithful to His law; for

we read in the early pages of Scripture:

“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Tell the children of Israel to make fringes in the corners of their garments, putting there ribbons of blue. When they shall see this blue, they will remember the commandments of the Lord’.”

Mary wove these blue threads into Christ’s garments, and through the years when Christ saw them He thought of His Father, who commanded them, and of His Mother, who wove them. Blue can remind us, too, of the abiding law of our Father and the abiding love of our Mother. Clouds come and go, storms grow and die, but the blue of the skies and seas remains forever, as God’s law remains and Mary’s love.

If whenever we see blue we recall its symbolism of faithfulness and its dedication to Mary, we will be constantly reminded of her fidelity to us, constantly urged to remember her faithfully in return. Anything blue, a flower or dress or book or river, can remind us of Mary’s ever-faithful love. Wearing something blue, especially on Saturdays, helps one to recall her loving protection, and it pleases Mary by honouring her day by wearing her symbol of fidelity. It reminds us to pray to her; it is indeed a prayer in itself.

MOTTO AND MEMORY

Writing the name-motto “Mary Always Remembers You” in blue letters on a few white cards and placing the cards where we will notice the name whenever we open a book or drawer or door will be a great help to our memory. With a little thought we can find some places to suit, places which will bring the name often to our gaze without attracting the attention of others.

The motto associates in our mind the colour blue with Mary’s name and her constant watchfulness over us. It will help to repeat the sentence a few times while recalling the reasons for Mary’s love and some of its manifestations. These thoughts will slip away from us as we resume our daily actions, but seeing our cards will bring them back again. We will keep forgetting, but our written motto will keep reminding us. Rewriting or replacing the motto occasionally will keep us conscious of it. And if at each reminder we repeat her name again as a prayer, we will increase our grace and our fidelity to Mary.

We might write out some thoughts about each of the four words and then refresh our memory from time to time by rereading what we have written. The following lines can be either an example or a substitution for our own thoughts.

MARY ALWAYS REMEMBERS YOU

Mary always remembers you. Just addressing Mary by name is a wonderful prayer. God reveals His thoughts to us through His Church, and the Church honours Mary’s name highly, constantly joining it to the powerful name of Jesus. The Church grants a 300-day indulgence each time the name of Jesus or Mary is repeated or recalled prayerfully. It grants its largest indulgence for any short prayer (seven years each time) for the aspiration “Jesus, Mary, Joseph.” It calls only the names of Jesus and Mary holy, blessing these two names in the Divine Praises and giving only these two names special feast days.

The name Mary is a prayer so brief that it can be repeated hundreds of times in a day, and it is very powerful in resisting the snares of the devil or the weaknesses of our own fallen nature. It is powerful because as Mother of the Creator, Mary is Queen Mother of All Creation. As co-Redeemer and first of the redeemed and Mediatrix of all grace, Mary is queen of our race in a special way. By her place in God’s plans Mary reveals His love for mankind; hence, you have but to mention her name prayerfully to understand His loving mercy more fully and to experience it more abundantly.

Mary always remembers you. Her offering on Calvary was made for your salvation. Easter Sunday’s triumph was yours as well as hers, for it completed Christ’s redemptive act. She worked for you in the years she stayed on earth to mother the infant Church that it might grow strong enough to carry Christ’s graces down through the centuries to you. She remembers you now in heaven as she watches over you day and night to guide you safely home.

Mary always remembers you; in return remember her always, but especially when you are in need. Recall St. Bernard’s plea: “When assailed by the fury of temptations, when sorrow and tribulations surround you, invoke Mary. If you are burdened by the weight of your sins, call upon Mary. In dangers, in anguish and distress, call upon Mary, pronounce the name Mary. Let this sweet name never be far from

your lips and never depart from your heart.”

Blue, the symbol of fidelity, is Mary’s colour; she is ever-faithful, ever-present, ever-helping with love. Fidelity in return should mark your devotion to her. Your effort to remember her always in life will assure your enjoying her greater love always in eternity.

PERSEVERING LOVE

Mary always remembers you. Why? Because she is truly your Mother with a mother’s persevering love. Because she offered Christ to death for you and wishes to make that offering successful. Because as Mediatrix of grace it is her place in heaven to watch over you on earth. Because in heaven where she rules with her son, she sees the mansion which He has prepared for the day of your arrival.

How? Actively, with the brave and unselfish devotion which her prototypes Esther and Judith showed in saving their people. Your soul is her castle which she defends against every assault. She remembers you wisely, effectively, lovingly, for God guides her with His knowledge and power and love. With Him and through Him and in Him she remembers you constantly with a love as prudent and persevering and patient as it is powerful.

Mary always remembers you. You in your weakness; you in your glory of grace; especially you who seek her and return her love. She watches over sinner and saint, over the weak and wicked that they may repent, and over the just that they may persevere. You, her children, whoever you are - while life lasts, Mary works for you.

St. Alphonsus was fond of calling her “my Mary.” Each of you can truly say the same. God made her to be your Mother as well as His own. He intended that her glory should help you to know and love Him through your love for her. His dying bequest and command proclaimed that she belongs to you and you to her. On Pentecost, Mary received the Spirit to help her mother the Church for your sake. A true mother spends more time with her child as its needs increase. This is a difficult age; Mary, Comforter of the Afflicted, is increasing the manifestation of her abiding love.

And so we have seen that Mary is truly present at all times, always remembering you with active love. She is the valiant woman of the Scripture: prudent, holy, wise, powerful, faithful. The saints are enthusiastic about her; the angels rejoice to serve her; God Himself finds endless delight in her company. And this glorious woman attends you constantly, loving you with a love far greater than you can ever have for anyone.

The least you can do in return is to greet her occasionally with an “Ave Maria,” a “Good morning, Mother,” with the joyful love which Jesus and Joseph showed when they greeted her in Galilee. This is the least; the most and the best is to give yourself to her completely, turning to her, trusting her, loving her in every act and every hour of your life.

God wishes you to strive for this goal. Mary wishes it. Christ gives you a charming example. By many rights they claim this return for all that they have done for you. By many means they help you to make it. It is a joy to work with them to understand and use this glorious truth: Mary Always Remembers You.

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