

MAY 16-17, 2020




## OUR LADY, QUEEN OF THE YOUGH CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

*Pennsylvania Charitable Trusts*

*Our vision is to lead all whose lives we touch into a living relationship with the person of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament, Service and Fellowship.*

**[www.youghcatholic.org](http://www.youghcatholic.org)**



**6<sup>th</sup>**  
**SUNDAY OF  
EASTER**

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always."*  
- Jn 14:15-16

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2003, 1988, 1970 GCD

CLP

**To our visitors ...** If you are just passing through, we are glad you chose to worship with us. If you are seeking a new church home, please know there is always room in our pews and a place in our hearts for you.

### DEVIVO CENTRE

116 South 2nd Street  
Connellsville, PA 15425

724.628.6840 (f) 724.628.0838

MON-THU 8:30am-noon/1-4pm  
FRI 8:30am-1pm

### BRADY CENTRE

459 Ranch Road  
Dunbar, PA 15431

724.277.4236 (f) 724.277.8954

MON, TUE, THU, FRI 9am-3pm

## Confession

will be offered at St. Rita's Bucci Hall on TUE evenings beginning at 6, and SAT mornings beginning at 11:30, plus by appointment by calling the DeVivo Centre at 628-6840.

**We work with the Holy Trinity Conference of St. Vincent DePaul** to help our neighbors in need. Their number is 724.562.3341.

**We are grateful for the advertisers** who cover the cost of printing our bulletins.

Please frequent their businesses in support of *them*.

This week's featured advertiser is 24SEVEN, Medical Alert System.

Our Faith Community consists of the Parish Families of Immaculate Conception, Connellsville (1869), Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Dunbar (1874), Saint John the Evangelist, Connellsville (1895), and Saint Rita of Cascia, Connellsville (1915).



We also embrace the former Parish Families of Saint Vincent de Paul, Leisenring (1888-2008), Sacred Heart, Dawson (1889-2007) Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Connellsville (1901-1913), Saint Emory, Connellsville (1903-1970), Holy Trinity, Connellsville (1903-2008), Saint Polycarp, West Leisenring (1917-1997).

## OUR STAFF - WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

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## SAT-SUN, MAY 9-10, 2020

### STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

#### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Adult.....	\$3,709.00
Loose.....	138.00
Maintenance.....	214.00
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$4,061.00</b>

Cemetery .....	\$205.00
Accent.....	\$10.00
Holy Thursday .....	\$5.00
Good Friday/Holy Land .....	\$10.00
Easter .....	\$70.00
Ascension .....	\$35.00
Communication Media.....	\$23.00

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#### ST. ALOYSIUS

Adult.....	\$1,735.00
Children/Young Adults .....	\$15.00
Parish Improvements.....	\$5.00
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$1,755.00</b>

Accent.....	\$8.00
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#### ST. JOHN

Adult.....	\$3,124.00
Loose.....	670.00
Maintenance.....	160.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$3,954.00</b>

Cemetery .....	\$80.00
Holy Thursday .....	\$25.00
Good Friday/Holy Land .....	\$45.00
Easter .....	\$275.00
Easter Flowers .....	\$20.00
Ascension .....	\$15.00

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#### ST. RITA

Adult.....	\$5,126.00
Loose.....	605.00
Maintenance.....	210.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$5,941.00</b>

Cemetery .....	\$217.00
Lenten Self-Denial .....	\$2.00
Ash Wednesday.....	\$5.00
Holy Thursday .....	\$10.00
Good Friday/Holy Land .....	\$5.00
Easter Flowers .....	\$3.00
Easter .....	\$101.00
Ascension .....	\$73.00
Communication Media.....	\$80.00

If you've not yet received your MAY/JUN offertory envelopes, our vendor will get them to you ASAP. In the meantime, you may use plain envelopes with your name and church marked.

## 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER - MAY 17, 2020



### ACTS 8:5-8, 14-17 SURPRISING HEROES

The story goes that Philip the deacon went from Jerusalem to Samaria to preach the Gospel there. But after he baptized the people, Peter and John still had to follow after him to lay hands on the new believers so they could receive the Holy Spirit. It appears from the story that Philip needed help. It looks like he did not do a very good job on his own.

But give credit where it is due. Samaria was hardly the place the apostles expected the Gospel to take root. They must have been

surprised that Philip got anywhere at all with the people who had been enemies of Jerusalem for so long.

Remember how Jesus surprised people with the parable of the Good Samaritan and that the only grateful leper among the 10 he cured was Samaritan too. Nobody expected Samaritans to be heroes. But Philip the deacon made headway in enemy territory. He preached, expelled demons, and cured the paralyzed. Not a bad record.

When Peter and John arrived, the Holy Spirit came with them. Look carefully at the people you think are not doing a very good job or people about whom you have low expectations. They may be instruments of Christ, preparing the ground for the Spirit of life.

*Lectionary Bulletin Inserts: Reflections on the First and Second Readings, Year A © 2019 Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications. All rights reserved. Written by Paul Turner. Lectionary for Mass © 2001, CCD.*

Please give generously to the Catholic Communication Campaign, which helps support diocesan communication projects.

Half the proceeds stay in the diocese to support local communications efforts, including the Catholic Accent, the diocesan website and other social media platforms. Support of the CCC helps people across the country experience the Scriptures in new ways, including podcasts and email subscriptions. For more information about the CCC and other projects funded by this collection, visit [www.usccb.org/cc](http://www.usccb.org/cc).

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

MON: Acts 16:11-15; Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b; Jn 15:26 - 16:4a

TUE: Acts 16:22-34; Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8; Jn 16:5-11

WED: Acts 17:15, 22 - 18:1; Ps 148:1-2, 11-14; Jn 16:12-15

THU: Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3, 6-9; Eph 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20 (for Ascension); otherwise Acts 18:1-8; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 16:16-20

FRI: Acts 18:9-18; Ps 47:2-7; Jn 16:20-23

SAT: Acts 18:23-28; Ps 47:2-3, 8-10; Jn 16:23b-28

SUN: Acts 1:12-14; Ps 27:1, 4, 7-8; 1 Pt 4:13-16; Jn 17:1-11a; or (for Ascension) Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3, 6-9; Eph 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20

## MASS SCHEDULE & INTENTIONS

THE MASS INTENTIONS LISTED BELOW WILL BE CELEBRATED AT A PRIVATE MASS ON THAT DAY BY ONE OF OUR PRIESTS. PLEASE KNOW THAT YOUR INTENTION IS BEING FULFILLED.

### SAT, MAY 16 EASTER WEEKDAY

- SR Salvatore Cagnina (Wife & Family)
- SA Pro Populo
- IC John Kaylor, Sr. (Wife, Connie)

### SUN, MAY 17 6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

- SR Barbara Swengish (Lawrence Swengish & Family)
- SA Edward Hardy (Friends & Neighbors of Monarch)
- IC Charles Helms (Grandchildren & Great-grandchildren)
- SJ The Heinbaugh & Balena Families (The Heinbaugh Family)

### MON, MAY 18 ST. JOHN I, POPE/MARTYR

- SR Paul Mongell, Sr. (Mary Mongell & Family)
- SA John "Jay" Orazi (Janice & Warren)

### TUE, MAY 19 EASTER WEEKDAY

- SJ Barb Visocky (Tom Visocky)
- SA Eugene Carbonara (Joe Turek)

### WED, MAY 20 ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST

- SR Ann Flockvich (Bob & Cookie Flockvich)

### THU, MAY 21 ASCENSION OF THE LORD, ST. CHRISTOPHER OF MAGALLINES, PRIEST, COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

- IC George & Margaret Grimm (Barcine Graft & Family)
- SA Sturge Hughes (Regina Hughes & Jeff & Ryan Butela)
- SJ For the Staff of the Dunbar & Connellsville Parish Offices

### FRI, MAY 22 ST. RITA OF CASCIA, RELIGIOUS

- SR Anthony Dellavechia (M/M Michael DeCarlo)
- SA Joseph L. Villaneuva (Brittney Lynn & Emma Villaneuva)

### SAT, MAY 23 EASTER WEEKDAY

- SR Joseph & Anna Simko, & Joseph & Michaelina Petzel (Mary Petzel)
- SA Florence Cope (Patty Cudnik Brown)
- IC Pro Populo

### SUN, MAY 24 7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

- SR Michael & Philomena Cavaliere (Rita & Jim Pratt)
- SA John W. "Jack" Taylor, Jr. (Amy & David Hertzneil)
- IC Anne Clemmer (Theresa G. Foley)
- SJ Kathryn Sova Dowman (Sisters, Dolores Natale & Josephine Evanina)

Go to [youghcatholic.org/stream](http://youghcatholic.org/stream) for the live-streaming of Mass each SUN at 10am, and THIS THU, MAY 21 at 6pm, for the Mass for the Ascension of the Lord.

Altar flowers for this SUN's live-streamed Mass are in memory of Charles Helms, given by his wife and family.



the repose of the soul of  
LEONA UROSEK (mother of  
Debbie Krivus and John  
Urosek), who died recently.

May her soul and the souls of the faithful  
departed, through the mercy of God, rest  
in eternal peace.

## ST. ALOYSIUS



**DLA Goal**    **Pledged - 127 gifts**  
**\$26,715**    **\$24,442 (91.49%)**

### FREE WATER, HEAT OR ELECTRICITY DURING THIS HEALTH CRISIS?

A reminder from the PA attorney general's office about utility payments during the COVID-19 crisis.

"The Attorney General's Office of Consumer Advocate called on the Public Utility Commission to prohibit the shutoff of electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, telecommunication, and steam utilities for the duration of the crisis."

The notice goes on to say "Call your (utility) provider to see if you qualify for discounted rate programs and to alert them of employment changes or the loss of a job. If . . . your utilities have been improperly shut off, call the Attorney General's Consumer Advocate at 1-800-684-6560 ...."

**IMPORTANT! Bills that are not paid now will continue to add up and must be paid when the crisis is over!**

**Therefore, if you are still receiving income and can pay your utility bills, it is critical that you do so.**

**If you cannot pay a bill due to this crisis, it is urgent that you contact your utility company now to explain your situation and make an arrangement to satisfy the utility company.**

If you know of someone who needs to know this information, please pass it along.



Thank you,  
St. Vincent DePaul  
Society

Once again St. Rita Church will be open for private prayer, daily (SUN-SAT), from 11am to 2pm. Please be aware that visitors must wear masks to protect others who are inside, and all people inside of the church must adhere to social distancing requirements, sitting 6 feet away from others, unless they are members of the same household.

We will also open St. Rita Church for private prayer on TUE evenings, from 6-8. We will hear confessions on TUE evenings at 6pm until needed, and SAT mornings at 11:30 until needed. Confessions will be held in St. Rita's Bucci Hall. Masks and social distancing requirements must also be followed at confession.



Please remember that at 6:30pm every TUE thru JUN 9, we will be praying the virtual novena to St. Anthony of Padua.

This will be offered as a pre-recorded live-stream on St. Rita's Parish Festival Facebook page, and also on our parish website [www.youghcatholic.org](http://www.youghcatholic.org).

**FRI, MAY 22 IS THE FEAST DAY OF ST. RITA OF CASCIA (1381-1457).** If you're ever in Philadelphia on May 22, forget parking anywhere near Saint Rita's shrine. Cars line streets and fill medians as throngs pack a candlelight vigil and six Masses, honoring this patroness of lost causes, hopeless situations, and - as her statue in countless churches built by twentieth-century immigrants testifies - difficult marriages, troubled homes, and alienated children.

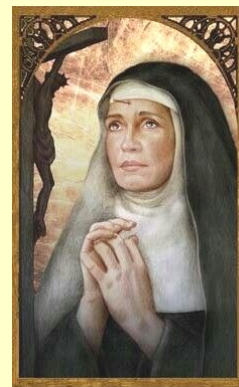
Wise people warn, be careful what

you pray for. "Divine Savior," Rita prayed, "let me suffer like you!"

Obedient to parents who refused her wish to become a nun, Rita married a man who returned her devotion with twenty years of abuse. When enemies murdered him, Rita's two sons swore revenge. Paintings depict her pointing the angry boys toward Christ crucified, whom she begged to restrain them. Within the year, both sons died.

Alone now, Rita went to the convent but was refused.

The nuns feared violence, since one of them was related to the murderer. Rita arranged peace between the families, made vows, and became much sought after as a counselor and intercessor for forty years on earth - and ever since in heaven.



### MAY IS THE MONTH DEDICATED TO MARY, MOTHER OF GOD AND OUR SPIRITUAL MOTHER.

We turn to her often in our needs, as under the title of the Immaculate Conception, she is the patroness of these United States of America.

Let us pray this:

#### Prayer to Mary Immaculate

Blessed Mother Mary, we turn to you in prayer for all the people in these United States. We again place ourselves in your care, in the gentle hands that cradled the Child Jesus.

We ask you to make us alive in your faith, more generous in your love, more trusting in your hope. Teach us to imitate Jesus, as you did, and always to follow Him with your courage. Mother Mary, help us to become a people who hunger for justice and who burn with compassion for those who suffer in our midst. Make us a people who cherish and defend the dignity of every human person. Free us from all selfishness and self-interest, that we truly might be the builders of the Kingdom of God.

Immaculate Mary, help us to stand among the family of nations as a people of vision and courage, who will gift this world with new life, new hope, and the unity for which your Son died. Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who turn with confidence to you today. Amen.

### PLEASE REMEMBER THESE PEOPLE ON OUR PRAYER LIST:

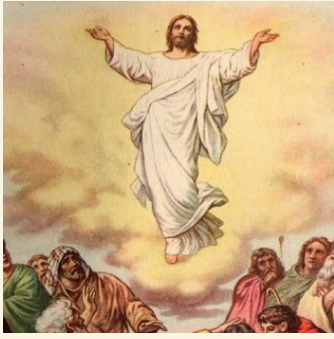
Patrick and Joan Frazier, Mario Scotto-DiMarco, Joe Maiese, Lora Rulli, Margaret Molinaro, Marsha and Barry Huey, Stephanie Tripoli, David Bixel & Family, Ruth Ann Denard, Anita Zentarsky.



"I will ask the Father, and he will give you . . . the Spirit of truth."  
*John 14:16-17*



Both parish offices will be closed on **THU, MAY 21**, in celebration of the **Ascension of Our Lord.**



## **THIS THU, MAY 21, IS THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD.**

The celebration of Easter is the oldest yearly festival of the Church. We know this because we still have a few of the writings of second century Christians, such as Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna.

When he was young he was taught by some of Jesus' disciples.

On the night of the Jewish Passover, Polycarp celebrated in memory of the death and resurrection of Christ. Other groups of Christians celebrated on the SAT night and SUN that followed the Passover. In those earliest years of the Church, once a year at Passover time, Christians celebrated the fullness of Jesus - His birth and baptism, His life and teachings, His death and burial and resurrection. They

celebrated the glory of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

Especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, new holy days were kept in celebration of Gospel events. That's when most Christians started to celebrate Christmas, Epiphany, the Presentation, the Annunciation, the Birth of John the Baptist, and many other festivals. This didn't happen everywhere at the same time. There were different ways of celebrating and different ways of calculating the seasons.

In the late fourth century many Christians began to celebrate a feast day in memory of the Ascension of the Lord. In most places this was kept on the 40th day of the 50 days of Easter rejoicing.

St. Paul wrote to the Church of Ephesus: "The fullness of Christ fills all in all." That is what we celebrate in Ascension Day. This day is not about the absence of Christ. It is about Christ's presence. At the conclusion of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says, "I am with you always."

**WE WILL BE LIVE-STREAMING A MASS FOR THIS HOLY DAY AT 6PM, FROM ST. JOHN, SIMILAR TO WHAT WE DO ON SUN MORNINGS. IT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE AS USUAL. HOPE YOU CAN CELEBRATE WITH US.**

**CEMETERY ENVELOPES.** IN THE ENVELOPE PACKETS DURING THE COMING MONTHS, THERE ARE 2 ENTITLED "CEMETERY CARE". This offering enables us to maintain the 11 Catholic cemeteries that are entrusted to the care of our

parishes, and to increase our permanent care fund. We hope to do some improvements at some of our cemeteries, along with the standard mowing and upkeeping of all the cemeteries. Please help us

continue to preserve the resting places of our deceased families and parishioners. Please share in these envelopes in memorial to those who have gone before us. May all who have died in Christ rest in Him.

**PLEASE NOTE:** As you prepare your graves for Memorial Day, I ask that you take all containers, rubbish, plastic flower pots and water jugs (any items you brought from home) with you, or please discard them in the dumpster. Please **DO NOT** leave garbage lying on the ground. I hope you can appreciate our policy and I thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

If you are placing artificial flowers on the grave, please put them in a secured vase. We cannot assume responsibility for artificial flowers just stuck in the ground. When planting real flowers, please clear space in front of the gravestone so that a



distinct boundary exists between flowers and grass.

**JUST A REMINDER:** No shrubs or small trees may be planted in our cemeteries. What may seem "small and cute" eventually turns into "overgrown and hard work" when a family no longer cares for the shrub or tree. Flowers are so much more colorful!

**PLEASE BE PATIENT!** With the wet weather we've had, there is much work that needs taken care of at our cemeteries. Please be patient as we clean up the graves and get fresh grass planted. We are doing our best to maintain the cutting of the grass with these rainy days. Thank you. Fr. Paul



**THE WOMAN AT THE WELL:  
THIRSTING FOR TRUTH**

**"I will ask the Father and He will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But YOU know Him, because He remains with you, and will be IN YOU. I will NOT leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but YOU will see me, because I live and YOU WILL LIVE." John 14:16-19**

If you are EVER in doubt of Jesus' all-encompassing and intimate love for you, just look at these verses above from our Gospel reading this weekend. It is here that Jesus uses his own intimate relationship with the Father to assure US that He (and the Father) are equally close to us and dwell WITH US through the power of the Holy Spirit.

But who is the Holy Spirit? Truth be told, I always feel REALLY BAD for the Holy Spirit. In our mere human language and understanding of God, it is extremely difficult to put into words WHO or WHAT the Holy Spirit IS. While we have no problem picturing God the Father or the person of Jesus Christ; we often do not have the visuals (other than a DOVE) to understand what the Holy Spirit does for us.

Something that has been helpful to me when considering the Spirit has been to reflect and meditate upon the words conferred to us by the Bishop at our Confirmation:

**BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT  
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

This seal is a consecration, representing the safeguarding by the Holy Spirit of the graces given to you at your Baptism. But what does the Bishop mean when he says that you are being sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit?

That word gift is extremely intentional here.

When I think of a gift, I think about several things.



First I think of a physical gift- a present; something that is given to me. Not only is it given to me, but it is given to me out of love; freely. A true gift is not something forced upon someone else.

A gift is also something unique to the person. When you give a gift (if it is a good gift), do you simply run to the store, grab the first thing you see, pay, and leave? No. You put THOUGHT into the gift. You make it personal. You take the thing that you know the person you love would like best and you elevate it so that when they receive the gift, they will be able to USE IT in a way that perhaps no one else could.

**THAT** is what the Holy Spirit does for us when he gives us His gifts. He gives us the gift **OF HIS VERY LIFE**. He gives it out of love. The Holy Spirit doesn't want anything from you. He isn't trying to sell you anything. He **FREELY** gives us His life, even though there are many times we don't deserve it. He gifts it to us time and time

and time again. He gifts us his love. He also puts a lot of thought into the specific gifts that He is going to impart to me and YOU.

The truth is, God knows you better than you even

God knows what's best because He knows us better than we know ourselves

know yourself. The Holy Spirit **KNOWS** what you are naturally good at, what motivates you, what gives you joy, and what wakes you up in the morning. He knows what makes YOU, **YOU**. And through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, He imparts Himself to each and every one of you in unique ways so that you will be able to **USE** that gift in a way that perhaps, no one else could.

**The Holy Spirit's gifts are given not just to make YOU happy, but for the good of the whole Church.**

If you have never done so, I invite you to think about your gifts. What makes YOU, YOU? I also want you to consider one last element of a gift that I haven't mentioned...when you receive a gift, **YOU HAVE TO OPEN IT**. You have to actually **DO** something with it. You can't keep your gifts to yourself. God gave us the Holy Spirit so that **WE** could **GO OUT AND MAKE DISCIPLES**. How can **YOU** use your gifts for the good of the whole Church?

The decision to open up your gift is yours and yours alone. Please pray that you can open yourself up completely to the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is only **THEN** that we can live a completely joy filled life in loving service to Christ and His Church.

Christ's peace  
and His Mother Mary's love,  
*Mary Sampey*



A Google Image search can be interesting and instructive. When I search on Google for “who is Father Dan Carr” and go to the images tab, the first

image that comes up is a picture of me at my ordination. The second and third images are of a Msgr. Daniel Carr in Ireland. From what I can tell, he is retired now but was the president of a university and the apostolic administrator for his diocese. While those credentials are pretty impressive, it looks like I’m on top. Your move, Monsignor. (Note: It appears there is only one Fr. Paul Lisik and one Fr. Julius Capongpangan. Even the internet doesn’t dispute that they are one-of-a-kind.)

When I search “what is the Catholic Church” it is very instructive. The images nearly all show some combination of the same four things: a church building, the Mass, clerics (the pope, bishops, or priests), and an attack or defense of the Church’s teachings. This is the public conception of the Catholic faith and is, in a very real way, the modern day “face” of the Catholic Church. It is rare that any national news speaks of the Catholic Church except when highlighting one of these four elements.

However, this is a very narrow and clerical view of the Church. It sees the Church primarily as a hierarchical organization made up of celebrities, buildings, things, and ideas. While the Church would not be Herself without these things, they are not the heart of the Church. According to Vatican II the Church is the bride of Christ and the People of God that “acknowledges [God] in truth and serves Him in holiness.” (*Lumen Gentium* 9).

Without this at the center, everything else loses its relevance.

Saint John Paul II sought a solution to this overly clerical vision of the Church in the person of Mary. During the Marian Year in 1987, the Pope-Saint found many different avenues to express his deep personal devotion to the Blessed Mother. But to me, there is none more fascinating than the Christmas address that he gave to the Curia that year. In it he refers to a “Petrine profile” of the Church and a “Marian profile” of the Church. (Note: This address is only available in Italian so my translation is not a professional one.)

*This Marian profile is just as, if not more, fundamental and characterizing for the Church as the apostolic and Petrine profile, to which it is profoundly united. And under this aspect of the Church, Mary takes precedence in the pilgrim People of God.*

*Mary is she who, predestined to be the Mother of the Word, is living continually and totally in the sphere of divine grace, under its living influence; she mirrored and was transparent to the life of God himself. Immaculate, “full of grace”, she was prepared by God for the Incarnation of the Word, and she found herself under the uninterrupted action of the Holy Spirit; she was the “Yes”, the “Fiat” par excellence to Him who had chosen her “before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4); and in docility, in humility, in compliance with the smallest hints of justice, she surrendered, as a sort of twice-mother by her complete conformity to the will of God: “The one who does the will of God is...my mother.” (Mk 3:35)....*

*In this sense, the Marian dimension of the Church comes before the Petrine dimension, while being strictly united and complementary. Mary, the Immaculate, precedes every other, including, obviously, Peter and the apostles: not only because Peter and the apostles, coming from the mass of mankind*

*born under sin, make up the part of the Church that is “sancta ex peccatoribus” [holy despite our sins], but also because their triple munus [office] aims at nothing other than to form the Church in that ideal of holiness, which is already preformed and pre-figured in Mary. As a contemporary theologian well said, “Mary is the Queen of the Apostles”...*

It is telling that Saint John Paul II makes this address to cardinals and clergy. He is reminding them that, while the world places the spotlight on them, the “Petrine profile”, as the center of the Catholic Church, it is not the most important dimension. In order to remain humble servants, they (and all clergy) must remember this. Mary is not just the subject of a nice feminine devotion that is meant for uneducated lay-people. She is at the heart of the Church - the perfect model of the humble disciple of Christ who does the will of God and strives for holiness. It is for this reason the Church Fathers spoke of Mary as a model for the Church and why Vatican II calls her the Mother of the Church.

My search on Google Images for “who is the Blessed Mother” looked very different from my search for the Catholic Church. Instead of church interiors I saw images of Jesus held in his mother’s arms and the powerful portrayals of the events of Scripture. Instead of polemics about Church teaching I saw inspiring and prayerful messages. And instead of clerics I saw large numbers of pilgrims in procession praying together. This is why I agree with St. John Paul II that this “Marian profile” of the Church points the world to Christ more effectively than any other profile does.

May our Marian reflections during this month of May renew our commitment to serving God in holiness and help the world to understand and recognize the true heart of Christ’s Church.