



Ta' Pinu Shrine

Our Lady, Queen of the Family

A CALL TO PRAYER



"ROSES FOR OUR LADY - QUEEN OF THE MAY"

The Scriptural Foundation for Marian Devotion

A reflection on Marian Devotion, through the lens of Scripture, "Why be devoted to Mary? By Dcn Edward Looney

On May 1st, the Church celebrates the memorial of St. Joseph the Worker. May 1st also inaugurates the Month of Mary. The memorial of St. Joseph almost seems fitting as we begin a month dedicated to Mary because we remember how St. Joseph provided for the Holy Family as a carpenter. To celebrate St. Joseph is to celebrate his role as the husband of Mary and Foster Father of Jesus.

As a Church, we like to dedicate days, months, and years to specific causes and intentions. Thursdays have been honoured as a day dedicated to the Eucharist and priesthood; Fridays to our Lord's passion, and Saturdays to Our Lady. And our popes in the past decade have called for specific yearlong celebrations of the rosary, the Eucharist, St. Paul, and for our current year, a Year of Consecrated Life. June has been dedicated to the Sacred Heart, July to the Precious Blood, October to the rosary, and November to the Holy Souls. Suffice it to say, our Church loves her devotions which serve as an aid to her faithful's spiritual lives.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is deeply rooted in scripture. Let us look to three examples: **Elizabeth, Mary herself, and Jesus.** After hearing the announcement of the Angel Gabriel, "*Hail Mary, full of grace*" and the ensuing dialogue which revealed Elizabeth was pregnant with child, Mary went in haste to the home of Elizabeth and Zachariah. After Mary's greeting to Elizabeth, John the Baptist leaped in her womb for joy, causing Elizabeth to proclaim, "*Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.*" Elizabeth acknowledges Mary as the mother of the Lord. *In the gospels, Elizabeth becomes the first to sing the praises of the Virgin Mary.* After Elizabeth proclaimed her praise of Mary, Mary went on to prophesy about future generations of Marian devotion in her Magnificat. "*Behold, from now, on all ages will call me blessed.*" In recounting her praise of God's goodness to her and all of Israel, *Mary understood that future generations would call her blessed because she was going to be the Mother of Jesus, the son of God.* The third example that we can draw upon from the scriptures is the example of Jesus himself. As a son, He would have been obedient to His mother because he had received his human nature from her. By honouring His mother on earth, Jesus gave honour to His father in heaven. And Jesus himself, while hanging from the cross in John's gospel, entrusted Mary to John, and John to Mary. *By this very act, Mary became the mother of all believers.* Moreover, In 1 Corinthians 11:1, St Paul says, "*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*" If we want Christ to live His life in us and through us, *if we want to be imitators of Christ, we must have a filial love for the Virgin Mary.* Luke 2:51 tells us that Jesus "was subject to Mary and Joseph. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them." In imitation of Christ, we then turn to His Mother for intercession. In the gospels, Jesus addressed a specific question: *Who are my mother and brothers?* To which he responded "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" Through Christ, we have become sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters.

As a family, we need a Father (God) and a mother, (Mary)

In addition to Mary as our mother, we have a mother in the Church!

When we honour Mary, we honour Christ. As a Mother, she cares for her children and makes intercession for them. She asks the Father to bestow blessing upon them, which in turn has earned her the reward of being a mediatrix of grace. God has accorded many privileges to Mary which have been made known through the teaching authority of the Church. She was preserved from the stain of original sin and was assumed body and soul into Heaven where she now reigns as Queen with her Son. During the month of May, the children of Mary will flock to her intercession. Since May is Mary's month, people may take up the practice of the daily rosary, add a few extra Marian prayers like the Memorare or the Litany of Loreto to their daily repertoire, crown an image of Mary with flowers, or make a Marian pilgrimage. As the children of Mary, our Marian devotions are the ways in which we tell Mary we love her.

During this month, let us give Mary a rose- our love. Ave Maria!



From the Catholic Catechism

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Christ Jesus "gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own" (Titus 2:14).

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet 2:9)

One enters into the People of God by faith and baptism. "All men are called to belong to the new People of God" (LG 13), so that, in Christ, "men may form one family and one People of God" (AG 1).

The Church is the Body of Christ. Through the Spirit and his action in the sacraments, above all the Eucharist, Christ who once was dead and is now risen, establishes the community of believers as his own Body

In the unity of this Body, there is a diversity of members and functions. All members are linked to

one another, especially to those who are suffering, to the poor and persecuted.

The Church is this Body of which Christ is the head. She lives from him, in him, and for him; he lives with her and in her.

The Church is the Bride of Christ: he loved her and handed himself over for her. He has purified her by his blood and made her the fruitful mother of all God's children.

The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the soul, as it were, of the Mystical Body, the source of its life, of its unity in diversity, and of the riches of its gifts and charisms.

Hence the universal Church is seen to be 'a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit'" (LG 4 citing St. Cyprian)

SPIRITUALITY (HOLINESS) : They, who shut themselves in the tiny heaven of the soul, where He Who created heaven and earth dwells, (Comm. "If they are in God's Grace"), may be certain that in a short time they will progress far.

St Teresa of Avila



Gospel Reflection:

"I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty;

for cut off from me , you can do nothing".

On the last Sunday of April, Jesus announced to us how much he loves us, and that like a good shepherd, he will lay his life to protect us from the wolf, the devil. "The Good Shepherd is one who lays down his life for the sheep".

After telling us that he is the "Good Shepherd", and what he would do for us, his sheep, to show how important it is that we know him and keep ourselves united with him, he gave us another example that no one could miss to understand. He compared himself to the vine and us to its branches, "I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he is who bears much fruit".

Jesus, the promised Messiah, came into this world to redeem us from the bond of sin. Through all his words, actions and miracles, he taught us how to avoid sin and strengthen ourselves against our spiritual enemy, the devil. Finally, like the good shepherd, he shed his blood, down to the last drop, to save us. However this is not enough for us to make ourselves members of his flock and enjoy the merits of all he had done for us. After all these gifts, it is our turn to keep ourselves united with him by practicing what he taught us and strengthen ourselves by the means he has left us, by drinking his water that wells to eternal life. The vine and its branches are a perfect example how our life should be.

Jesus is the stem. Each one of us became one of his branches when we received our Baptism and if we grew in a good family, we continued to suck the spiritual marrow from Jesus for a long time, like the branch from the stem. However, although the Christian would keep himself connected to the stem-Jesus, during his early life due to his family's help and control, unless he or she is very careful and alert at all times, when grown up, he or she, might be tempted to cut himself/herself from the stem, cut from Jesus, by committing sin and by abandoning those sources of spiritual life, instituted by Jesus himself, for our spiritual benefit, the sacraments, especially the sacrament of reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

Date	Liturgical Celebrations for May 2015	<u>Opening the Door of Mercy</u> On April 14 th , H.H Pope Francis bowed in front of the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica to officially convene the next Jubilee, the Holy Year of Mercy. During this Year, the door symbolically becomes a 'Door of Mercy', with millions of pilgrims crossing through it. Within the coming months, and with that same spirit convened upon to work together, specially with the help of all the various Ethnic groups at the Shrine, we will draw a plan as to how we will be commemorating the start of the Holy Year of Mercy, which coincides with the Celebration of the Feast of The Immaculate Conception on the 8th December 2015. SO WATCH THIS SPACE !!! For more details!!!
Sat 2nd May 2015	First Saturday of the Month Immaculate Heart of Mary Devotion at 2.00p.m <i>Rosary procession, Confession, Holy Mass and Benediction</i>	
Wed 6th May 2015 15th Anniversary	1st of 15 Devotional Wednesdays in preparation for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. Special Blessing of Mothers and Grandmothers	
Sun 10th May 2015	Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni From 1.45 p.m. <i>Confession, Rosary, Benediction, Holy Mass and Divine Mercy Chaplet</i>	
Wed 13^h May 2015	2nd of 15 Devotional Wednesdays in preparation for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. Feast of Our Lady of Fatima	
Sun 17th May	SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD Devotees are invited to attend Holy Mass in their parish	
Sun 17th & 31st May 2015	Our Lady of Lanka Oratory: Private Family Prayer Day	
Wed 20th May 2015	3rd of 15 Devotional Wednesdays Celebrating the life of Frenc Tal' Gharb (commonly known as Gozo's most famous faith healer, and an apostle of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu born 3.12.1892 died 17.5.67) Special Blessing of Sick	
Wed 20th May	Mother and Child Oratory Wednesday Novenas at 7.30p.m	We wish to present our sincere congratulations to the newly appointed Episcopal Vicar for Migrants and Refugees in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Rev Fr. Ciril A Božič OFM OAM, Chaplain of the Slovenian Community group at our All Nations Marian Centre has been assigned by His Lordship Archbishop Denis Hart, to this honourable position as of 1st May 2015. We hope and pray that by working together, all our community groups will share in the effort to help our very own active and energetic friend, Fr. Ciril, in his mission while serving in the Vineyard of the Lord.
SUN. 24th May	SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST SUNDAY Devotees are invited to attend Holy Mass in their parish	
Wed 27th May 2015	4th of 15 Devotional Wednesdays Celebrating the life of Karmni Grima (a Maltese peasant whose religious experience led to the construction of the church of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu born 2.2.1838 died 25.5.1922) Holy Hour—Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the gift He gave to Karmni Grima to receive our Heavenly Mother's Call	
Sunday 31st May	SOLEMNITY OF TRINITY SUNDAY 9.30 a.m. Prayers at Our lady of Fatima Oratory —followed by Holy mass in Portuguese	
	<u>MAJOR EVENTS IN JUNE 2015</u>	HONOUR THE COMMANDMENTS (Proverbs 14:16) A wise man fears and declines from evil; the fool leaps over and is confident. Let me grow in loving respect for Your eternal laws, O Supreme Judge of the World
Sun 21st June 2015 SOLEMNITIES	FEAST OF OUR LADY'S CALL FROM 2.00P.M This will also be a Joint Celebration FEAST OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP, Rosary- Procession, Holy Mass & Benediction	

God is merciful but he is just too. Each time Jesus forgave a sinner, he always warned the person not to commit sin anymore. And when Jesus revealed himself as 'full of mercy', he also put the condition that we must confess our sins. And who is that person that could say that have never sinned. St. John the Evangelist warns us that "He who says that he never sins is a liar".

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love". When commenting on the commandment of love, St. Augustine said, "Jesus commanded us 'to love one another'; not as people love only to spoil one another, nor as human beings love one another simply because they are human, but as people love one another because they are gods and sons of the Most High, and so brothers of his only Son".

When St Thomas the Apostle said to Jesus that they don't know the way, Jesus' answer was:

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE CAN GO TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME"



My Conversion Story

This truly inspirational story about the Eucharist deserves to be told in its full extent. This is part One and will be run over the next issue.

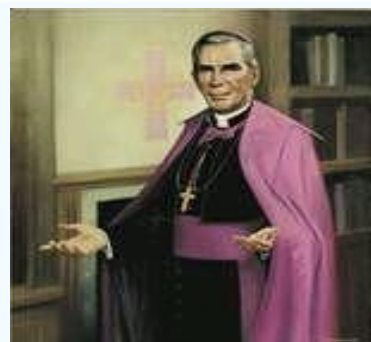
I first came to hear of God's love at a Billy Graham Outreach tent meeting on September 1955. It was there I gave my life to Jesus. I grew up under a very loving but strict evangelical family. We went to various churches.

I grew up under a very loving but strict evangelical family. We went to various churches. On September 2, 1961, we attended a Pentecostal church (AOG) where I was baptized in water and on September 20, 1961, I was baptized in the Holy Spirit and received the gift of speaking in tongues. I am recording these dates as they were very special milestones in my Christian life. In my teens, much to my shame now, I rebelled badly and wanted nothing to do with God. Later, I got married and moved from Essex down to Derbyshire. I still had niggles in the back of my head: I had forgotten God, had God forgotten me as well?

My wife and I began to attend a variety of churches similar to my youth but we never felt at home in any of them, though to be honest the people on the whole were very good and kind. It was while I was working away from home down in Dorset as a computer system engineer that I came across a church in a school that was truly alive and full of God's love.

Once again I recommitted my life to Jesus and knew I was His child. Later we found another church in Essex where we went for some years. Things were fine but it wasn't to last. On December 31, 1985, tragedy struck. I was involved in an accident at work. I became a TIO paraplegic. My case was not taken in time so we had no compensation but blessed be God, all our needs were met. Then the difficulties really began. I have believed and still do believe that God can heal people today but the church we were attending at that time took the verses of the Bible sadly of context. Because I was not "healed" it had to be because either "*sin in my life*" or "*that I didn't have enough faith*". They said things like, "Sorry, God has not given me a '*word for you*' and '*I had no hope*' etc. To my Surprise and the complete bewilderment of my fourteen-year old daughter we were eventually 'dropped'. I can say now to show that there is no bitterness in my heart. I continue to pray for those who acted this way but at the time I did weep at the unloving and apparent uncaring nature being shown to us, I knew that God Loved my family and me. It was through this great love of Jesus that I could accept that He was in control. I had lost the *fellowship* and since they had no wheelchair accessibility or warmth in their hearts towards me, I felt abandoned by man, not by Jesus.

I tried to find somewhere else to worship but it was not easy as many churches were not wheelchair accessible. We found one, locally, that was evangelical and the people were polite, but the next day, I had a visit from the pastor who told me in no uncertain terms "We do not believe God heals today." We felt devastated since we had not said one word about this and had only been to one meeting. I then decide that perhaps I could stay at home and read my Bible, pray and keep my relationship with Jesus on my own. ***As you will know if you are a Christian, this is nearly impossible...(To be continued)***



**"Who is going to save our Church?
Not our bishops, not our priests and religious. It is up to you, the people. You have the minds, the eyes, the ears to save the Church. Your mission is to see that your priests act like priests, your bishops like bishops, and your religious act like religious."
– Bishop
Fulton Sheen**

Our Lady Ta' Pinu Shrine

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