

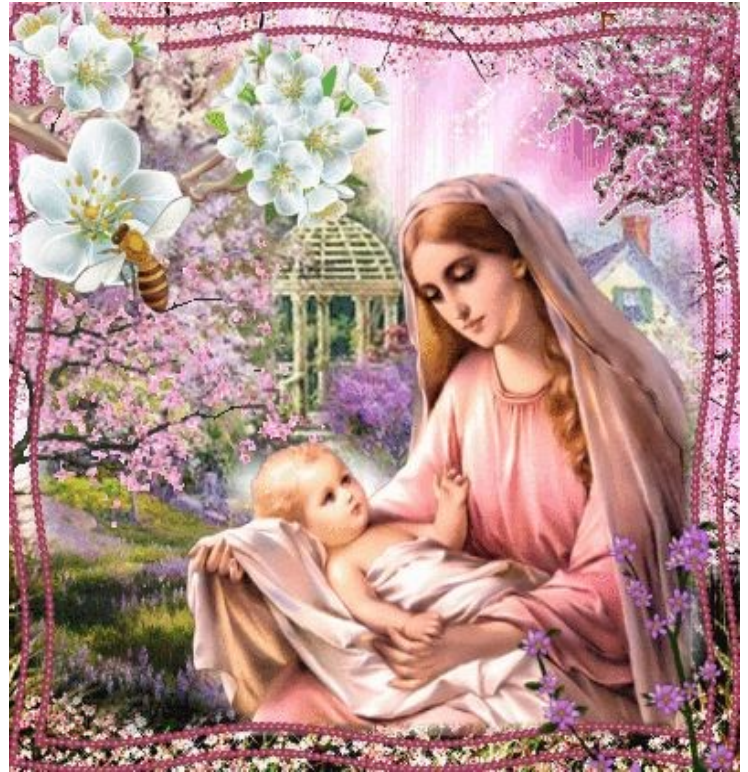


THE  
NATIONAL  
SHRINE OF **Mary**  
MOTHER OF THE CHURCH



“Your Mother is always with you.  
She's the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street.  
She's the smell of certain foods you remember,  
flowers you pick and perfume that she wore.  
She's the cool hand on your brow when you're not feeling well.  
She's your breath in the air on a cold winter's day.  
She's the sound of the rain that lulls you to sleep,  
the colors of a rainbow. She is Christmas morning.  
Your Mother lives inside your laughter.  
She's crystallized in every teardrop.  
A mother shows every emotion ..... happiness, sadness, fear,  
jealousy, love, hate, anger, helplessness, excitement, joy,  
sorrow... and all the while, hoping and praying  
you will only know the good feelings in life.  
She's the place you came from, your first home, and she's  
the map you follow with every step you take.  
She's your first love: your first friend, even your first enemy, but  
nothing on earth can separate you.  
Not time, not space...not even death!”  
Author: unknown

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### ***Through Mary, graces come***

Here is a promise from the Book of Jeremiah: “When you seek Me with all your heart you will find Me, says the Lord, and I will change your lot” (29:13-14).

Since I work at the National Shrine, I have listened to stories about people going to a pilgrimage. Some are seeking God with all their hearts. Some come in spiritual crisis. Some come to pray for a loved one. Others come simply to give thanks for the presence of God in their lives.

I believe that pilgrimages work!

People who have fallen from the faith can be renewed. Some pilgrims who were unemployed soon found jobs. Most pilgrims return home with a greater awareness of God's voice calling them. They feel more empowered to carry out their duties at home and in the workplace.

People talk about returning home with a “renewed spirit and a closeness to Mary.” Some come away with a new light in their life.

God uses Mary to save souls. She knows our needs. She answers our prayers. We can depend on her. She's our mother, after all.

With Mary in our hearts, we can make our pilgrimage journeys with hope and trust of the unimaginable graces our Lord has prepared for us. No matter how far away we feel we are from God, Our Lady, who loves us dearly, can serve as our co-pilot, pointing us safely toward salvation.

Through Mary, God will, indeed, change your lot!

Anonymous