



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



How does Mary Help Us as our Spiritual Mother?

Mary is our Spiritual Mother

Mary is my mother. She is your mother, too. Before Jesus died on the cross, He saw Mary and one of His disciples before Him. He said to Mary, "Woman, behold your son." To His disciple He said, "Behold, your mother." (from John 19: 26 and 27) He assigned this disciple (John) to watch over and protect Mary. The Catholic Church also looks at this event as Jesus giving Mary to all believers as our Mother. She is also the Mother of the Church.

How can Mary be our mother?

The Blessed Virgin Mary is our mother because of Jesus. She accepted God's invitation to be the Mother of the Messiah. She gave birth to Jesus and raised Him with St. Joseph. Mary is the Mother of Jesus, and because of this, she is also the Mother of the Catholic Church and Mother of all the faithful. She sets a great example for us of unwavering faith and trust in God. Mary comes to our aid to help us; she is a mother who wants to see all of us love God and listen to her Son. She helps us to do this in any way she can. Mary is a Mediatrix of graces, meaning that she dispenses graces to us that God gives to her for this purpose. Mary is the person closest to God. No other human was as close to Jesus as she was, as she is.



Mary is the Mother of Jesus.

At the Annunciation, the Archangel Gabriel told Mary that she was chosen by God to be the Mother of the Messiah. Mary said yes this role. "May it be done to me according to your word." (from Luke 1:38) She accepted God's invitation to be the mother of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Her faith and trust in God are a great example to us.

To prepare her for this role, by the grace of God, Mary was born without sin. We call this her Immaculate Conception. No other person has been born without original sin. Mary is an example of faith for us of steady, unwavering faith and of faithful service. Out of all the women in the history of the entire world, she was chosen to be the mother of our Savior. That says a lot about her right there! She should have our respect from this alone. The love and care Jesus shows to Mary is an example of how we can show her love and respect as well. For example, she has appeared many times on earth (sometimes with Jesus and Joseph, like at Fatima) to give a message to us. If Jesus did not hold her in high esteem, He would not allow her to come to earth to talk with us. Whenever she does talk with those on earth, it is to send a message to repent, to turn away from sin, and to love God more.

Mary comes to our aid to help us.

We can ask Mary for prayers just as we ask family and friends to pray for us. Mary loves Jesus. She wants everyone to know and love Him, too. Mary comes to our aid as our mother to help us and to point the way to her Son. Remember what she told the servers at the wedding feast at Cana? "Do whatever He tells you." (John 2:5) Think of the times she has appeared on earth. She has told people to turn away from sin, to pray the Rosary, to pray for sinners, and to pray for peace. She has told us that her Son is very much offended by the sins of people. She asks us to pray and repent. God allowed her to come to deliver these messages to us. He did not have to do that. But, God loves us and He loves His Mother, so He allows her to help us.



Mary is a Mediatrix of graces.

Mediatrix means mediator. Mary is the Queen of Heaven and earth, crowned by Her son as the Queen mother. (This was a common practice of the Jews in Old Testament times. The queen mother would help her son rule, not the king's wife.) Mary has nothing without God. He allows her to pass out His graces to us. This shows how important she is to God. We call her the Mediatrix of graces because she has the authority from God to give out God's grace to us. We only need to ask her for them.

Mary is the person closest to God.

As His loving, faithful Mother, Jesus loves Mary immensely and He trusts her to carry out only what He asks. You may have heard the saying that no one can love Mary more than Jesus already does. Jesus sets the example for us. He loves Mary as His Mother. We can love Mary as our Mother, too.

No other person has been as close to Jesus as Mary has. She carried Him for nine months, gave birth to Him in a stable, nursed Him, fled to safety with Him, raised Him, and was with Him in His final hours. He lived with Mary His Mother for 30 years until He began His public ministry. As God, Jesus could have picked any woman to be His mother. He chose Mary of Nazareth.

Jesus' love for Mary and His trust in her is not a love and trust He keeps to Himself. When He was on the cross, He introduced her to us as our mother. We can accept her as our mother, too. We can learn more about her and ask her to pray for us. We know her Son listens to her! We can ask her to pray for us to love Jesus even more and follow Him with open and sincere hearts. As our Mother, she will help us.