

9 Ways the Virgin Mary is Our Mother

May is the month of motherhood—Mother’s Day, the season of the beginning of new life, and the month traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin—and the perfect time to reflect upon the many ways that the Virgin Mary is our Mother.



1 Our literal Mother, our living Mother - “If

you ever feel distressed during your day—call upon our Lady—just say this simple prayer: ‘Mary, Mother of Jesus, please be a mother to me now.’ I just admit—this prayer has never failed me.” - Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Born into the mystical body of Christ through Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion, we are joined with the blessed Virgin in a profound way. She is the source of our “spiritual DNA.” Her role as the Mother of Christians is far beyond that of, for example, George Washington’s role as “the father of our country.” For it is not merely historical, but is a living and breathing union, with us now in this world and continuing in to the next.

The Mother that protects. 2

“Men do not fear a powerful hostile army as the powers of hell fear the name and protection of Mary.” Saint Bonaventure

A mother is always in the “first line of defense” of her children, on the lookout for their safety and ready to protect them at all costs, even at times ferociously. The history of the Church abounds in stories of the Virgin Mary’s miraculous protection of her children.

3 Nothing is too small or too great for the Holy Virgin.

“Let us run to Mary, and, as her little children, cast ourselves into her arms with a perfect confidence.” - Saint Francis de Sales

From the smallest cut on a toddler’s finger to a failed marriage of an adult child, a mother is always there to listen, to console, to help. There is no obstacle or predicament in our life that is too small or too great to bring in prayer and heartfelt conversation to the Holy Virgin, because....

She sees all and forgives all.... 4

There is nothing we should—or can—hide from our heavenly Mother. Nor anything that is so shameful that we should draw back from bringing it before her for her help. Think of the stories of saints who started out in life as anything but holy, such as Mary of Egypt, a young woman hopelessly and shamelessly addicted to sexual profligacy, who was miraculously barred by an invisible force from entering the Church of the Resurrection to venerate the Holy Cross. Realizing it was her way of life that was the obstacle to her entrance, she gazed at the Holy Virgin’s icon above the entrance and vowed repentance and obedience to the Virgin’s direction for her life. The miraculous barrier disappeared, she entered and worshipped, and then a heavenly voice directed her into the desert of Jordan, where for 47 years she lived a superhuman life of asceticism and solitary prayer, and became *Saint* Mary of Egypt.

5 ...but she expects so MUCH! - “Mary is the sure path to our meeting with Christ. Devotion to the Mother of the Lord, when it is genuine, is always to a life guided by the spirit and values of the Gospel.” - Pope John Paul II

The story of Saint Mary of Egypt Illustrates an important point. Just as no early mother is satisfied with her child remaining a toddler, the Blessed Virgin expects us too to stand up on our own two feet and walk. An the goals she expects us to walk to and reach is the highest; she wants all her children—you and I—to become saints!



A mother of good counsel. **6**

“As mariners are guided into port by the shining of a star, so Christians are guided to heaven by Mary.” - Saint Thomas Aquinas.

The Blessed Virgin doesn't just point us to the “yellow brick road” of sanctity. If we are smart enough to seek it in prayer, her guidance is there at every step of the journey.

7 The perfect example.

“May the Most Holy Virgin, who was the first to practice the gospel perfectly and in all its severity, even before it was proclaimed, spur us on to follow closely I her footsteps.” - Padre Pio

And what better guide for our journey to sainthood than the life of the Virgin Mary herself? In the Gospels she appears at most if not all of the major junctures in Christ's life-drama, and through these we begin to get a glimpse into her heart and mind. It is well worth the time to get a deeper look into her heavenly life and nature through books like Anna Catherine Emmerich's *The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary* and apocryphal accounts of her life, like *The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary* and *The Book of John Concerning the Falling Asleep of Mary*.

Another Dimension. **8**

A good mother is always encouraging to her children, wishing their best and highest. Our Heavenly Mother does that but even more, for she **empowers** her children for the best and highest. Many saints learned from their own direct experience how the Virgin Mary can grant Christians breakthroughs, spiritual graces and gifts of wisdom beyond their own reach and expectations.

9 “Rejoice, O Virgin!” - The Eastern Christian praises of the

Virgin Mary again and again sing “Rejoice, O Virgin!,” celebrating her glory and that of her Son. But there is another side to this rejoicing in her children's accomplishments and victories, both personal and public, so also the Mother of God's heart is gladdened by our efforts and success in spiritual life, by our progress towards “coming to the full measure of the stature of Christ.”

Like the best of children, may we always remember and appreciate the great gift of having the Holy Virgin as our true mother—and live accordingly.

