



From A Bishop's Journal (658)

Mary, Cause of Our Joy

In the litany of the Virgin Mary there is an invocation that has always intrigued me: “Mary, cause of our joy” or, as we say in Latin, “*Maria, causa nostrae laetitiae.*” I looked into the prayer of the Church for some understanding of this invocation, and I found satisfying answers.

Marvels

In very few words, the preface suggested for the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church, we find these words: “We do well always and everywhere to give you thanks, all-powerful and ever-living God. To celebrate the Virgin Mary, we sing your praise. By welcoming your Word into a pure heart, she conceived in virginity. By giving birth to her Creator, she prepared the beginning of the Church. By receiving at the foot of the cross your Son’s testament of love, she was given as her children all humankind which the death of Christ gave new birth to divine life. When the apostles waited for the Spirit who had been promised, she joined her prayer with theirs, and became in this way a model of the Church’s prayer. Raised to the glory of heaven, she accompanies and protects the Church with her maternal love, on its journey to the everlasting Land, until the glorious coming of the Lord.”

Many Reasons

The liturgy of the hours also clarifies the beautiful attribute given to Mary, cause of our joy. Through her, salvation came into the world. Giving fourteen reasons to praise and bless the Lord, the liturgy places in an atmosphere of thanksgiving. “With all the generations that have proclaimed the glory of the Virgin Mary, let us tell God of our gratitude for the humility of the Virgin and her docility to the Word, for her joy, and for the work of the Spirit in her, for the Child she carried and placed in the manger, for her offering in the Temple and her obedience to the Law, for her presence at Cana, for her quiet prayer and her faith in times of adversity, for her strength at Calvary and her joy on Easter morning, and because she is our Mother.

Marvel of the Resurrection

At Easter time, we have cause to say with all the Church the simple but very profound greeting: “Rejoice, Queen of heaven, alleluia, because he whom you deserved to carry in your womb, alleluia, is raised from the dead as he had said, alleluia. Rejoice and be glad, Virgin Mary, alleluia, because

he is truly resurrected, alleluia.” These words can fill our hearts all through the year. They remind us of the greatest marvel of all time, the central event in the history of humankind, the Resurrection of Jesus, Son of God and son of Mary.

Marvel in Us

The fact of being united to Mary allows us to contemplate all the marvels that God was pleased to accomplish in her. His decision is to continue His work by giving us, too, His most precious blessings. Mary can help us discover in ourselves the marvels that God is pleased to grace us with day after day. Truly, His love is from age to age: the marvel of the gift of life, the marvel of baptism, the marvel of the eucharistic presence, the marvel of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the marvel of the gift of mission.

Promised for Glory

By getting closer to Mary, by “learning at her feet,” as the late Pope John Paul II wrote, we shall understand more and more the glory to which we are called. As Mary was glorified in her being, so, too, are we being led to the final glory. Through baptism, we already share in Christ’s resurrection. From day to day, especially through the Eucharist, we become what we receive: the Body of Christ.

For a Good Pastoral Year

Mary, cause of our joy, always reminds us that Jesus is with us until the end of time. May she fill us with her most beautiful blessings throughout the new 2006-2007 pastoral year.

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