



MAY 2016: MARY, THE MOTHER OF MERCY

Bulletin Reflection - *This reflection is sized to fit in a column of a parish bulletin.*

Jubilee Year of Mercy - Mary, the Mother of Mercy

Have you ever found it difficult to forgive? If so, turn to Mary, the Mother of Mercy. She is the Mother of God whose "mercy endures forever" (Ps 118:1), the Mother of Jesus who prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). She is our surest help when we struggle with feelings of resentment or the desire to "get even." For did not she, of all people, have reason to feel resentment, to desire revenge, to despise those who betrayed and abandoned her Son? Did not she have reason to wish for revenge against the hypocrisy of religious leaders who twisted the truth of his words and the goodness of his mighty deeds to justify his condemnation as a charlatan deserving death? And, did not she have reason to wish for vengeance against the cowardice of Pilate, the cruelty of his executioners, and the mockery of the bystanders who scornfully laughed at her beloved Son stripped naked dying helplessly on the cross? Indeed, she had every reason to cry out to God asking for vengeance against the perpetrators of such barbarous cruelty! But, no, she did not. She forgave. She witnessed Jesus asking His Father to forgive.

So let us pray the "Hail, Holy Queen" every day during this Holy Year of Mercy, asking Mary, the Mother of Mercy, to help us be merciful when we feel the desire for revenge or for "getting even." May Mary, the Mother of Mercy be "our life, our sweetness, and our hope" as we learn how "blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." (Mt 5:7). -Sr. Annette Pelletier, IHM, Prof. of Theology, Immaculata University

How to Live It

Read the story of Immaculee Ilibagiza. In her book, *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*, she recounts how she survived the Rwandan genocide and was brought to forgive those who murdered her family through the prayer of the Rosary, especially the Sorrowful Mysteries. Then, consider taking up the Rosary and asking Our Lady to help you forgive those who have injured you.

Quote from Catholic Tradition:

"Seek refuge in Mary because she is the city of refuge. We know that Moses set up three cities of refuge for anyone who inadvertently killed his neighbor. Now the Lord has established a refuge of mercy, Mary, even for those who deliberately commit evil. Mary provides shelter and strength for the sinner."

-Saint Anthony of Padua

"Even while living in the world, the heart of Mary was so filled with motherly tenderness and compassion for men that no-one ever suffered so much for their own pains, as Mary suffered for the pains of her children." -Saint Jerome, Father and Doctor of the Church

To continue reflecting on this theme, consider one of these resources!

- **Recommended Book for the Month:** *The World's First Love*, Archbishop Fulton Sheen
- **Lighthouse Catholic Media CD:** *Mary: Handmaid of the Lord* by Blessed Mother Teresa