

FAITH HABITS For May 18, 2008

## SAY YES TO MARY

Mary of Nazareth is our greatest model of both mother, and faith. As the mother of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary should always hold a very special place in our faith. Each time we celebrate the Mass, the memory of His mother's suffering is made alive and present. This mother of Jesus teaches us to unite ourselves intimately to the sacrifice of her Son, our Redeemer. Mary is present in spirit in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Mary reigns in heaven and from heaven, always interceding on our behalf. Mary is truly our heavenly mother, to each of us, here in our own faith community.

Mary understands us because she was just as human as we are. She understands decision making (the Annunciation), she remembers childbirth (the birth of Jesus), the wonderful feeling of holding a newborn child, and then the responsibilities of raising this child. Mary worried, taught, loved, and laughed, just as all mothers do. All mothers can relate to the struggles of Mary, especially by understanding her remorse as she witnessed her Son's crucifixion. Mary is one with us in her humanity, and is a huge part of our salvation. Both Jesus and Mary have frequently invited us, as Catholics, to an intimate relationship.

When we honor Mary, we "go to Jesus". Through both the Immaculate Conception and her Assumption, Mary is the ideal symbol of motherhood and we must remember that she is always in full communion with God. By Honoring Mary, we, at St. Mary's will always be aware of her humanity and heed her instruction to us to "Do whatever He tells you". Mary can be our bridge to unity with Jesus, if we let her.

When all of us can see Mary as the model of our faith, and when we recognize her as our common mother, and when we ask Mary to pray for us and to intercede on our behalf, only then will we allow Mary to have a prominent place in our hearts. Only then can we truly believe "Blest are you among women, and blest is the fruit of your womb". Through Mary, we can have an intimate relationship with God and find God's grace in each of us.

All of us here at St. Mary's have found great comfort from Fr. Jim and his special devotion to Mary. Through his constant reflections and prayers, all of us have grown spiritually, and have found much love from this devotion. Also, we have found much comfort from knowing and finding Mary to be an important part of our spirituality. Let's hope that through our caring, study, prayers, and actions, we at St. Mary's can learn to understand God's vision and desire for our lives. Mary said "yes" to Jesus many times. Can we also say "yes"?

Let's all spend time reflecting on how Mary changes our lives.

Dale Cousino