



# Bringing Home the Word

**Pentecost Sunday (B)**  
**May 23, 2021**

## The Patience of Mary

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

A common image of Mary—surrounded by the apostles in the upper room, awaiting the Holy Spirit—has a name: *Regina Apostolorum*, Queen of the Apostles. She is enthroned as Queen Mother because, when her Son the King was enthroned and lifted up, he told her, “Behold your son.” With those words he entrusted Mary to the care of John, the apostles, and the whole Church. As any good queen and mother, she defends her own.

She is also called the Spouse of the Spirit, because it was in union with

the Spirit that she engendered the Son. She also engenders him in the apostles and in our souls through her powerful intercession and waiting on the Spirit.

One of Mary’s best qualities is waiting patiently until God’s power arrives. After the annunciation she waited nine months with Jesus in her womb. Then she waited some thirty years while Jesus grew and prepared for his mission. She waited during his public life and watched as his fame spread, but also as his enemies plotted. She waited at the foot of the cross and endured that unending Holy Saturday until the resurrection. And she waited patiently on the first Pentecost Sunday for the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit promised by her Son. She knew he would come through, as he always did.

We get impatient with God and want him to respond on our timetables according to our expectations. He waits to give us a chance to adapt our hearts to his plan and timing. He waits until the time is just right. +

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### A Word from Pope Francis

The Holy Spirit...reminds us that first of all we are God’s beloved children; all equal, in this respect, and all different. The Spirit comes to us, in our differences and difficulties, to tell us that we have one Lord—Jesus—and one Father, and that for this reason we are brothers and sisters!

—Pentecost Homily, May 31, 2020



## Sunday Readings

### Acts 2:1–11

And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were.

### 1 Cor 12:3b–7, 12–13 or Gal 5:16–25

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.

### John 20:19–23 or John 15:26–27; 16:12–15

But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How often do I seek Mary’s intercession or help?
- Patience is a fruit of the Spirit. How can you practice more patience this week?

# The Many Faces of Mary

By Johan van Parys

I celebrated my first Communion in 1967. Of the many religious gifts I received, my absolute favorite was a statue of Mary. She wore a beautiful pastel dress and had flowing blonde hair and brilliant blue eyes. Even more exciting, she played “Immaculate Mary.” The statue received a place of honor in my bedroom which, according to my concerned mother, looked more like a shrine. Part of my bedtime routine was to pray the Hail Mary in front of Mary. Then I took a moment of silence before winding up the mechanism and listening to “Immaculate Mary” as I quietly hummed along.

A couple of years later I realized that in real life Mary didn’t have blonde hair or wear pastel robes, and she had only herself as the immaculate conception until fairly recently. This came as a spiritual shock, and I felt betrayed; however, my curiosity of who Mary was and what she may have looked like was piqued.

Mary, mother of Jesus and wife of Joseph, was Jewish. More than likely she was born to a poor family and led a hard life. She undoubtedly worried about her son, especially when he set out to complete his mission at about age thirty. Regardless, she stayed by his side. She even flanked the cross he was nailed to and cradled his body after he was lowered from it.

Mothers are often the first to know the truth about their children, and Mary



knew Jesus was the Messiah before anyone else did. She testified to this not only during her lifetime, but also after she was assumed into heaven during her many apparitions.

I find these apparitions fascinating—not that they happened, but rather how they happened. It seems like Mary was and continues to be the supreme missionary. She understood that by taking on the image of the people to whom she was appearing, she could more easily win them over to her Son. In an instant, this foreign religion would receive a local face.

When she appeared in Mexico as Our Lady of Guadalupe, she appeared as an Aztec princess. Thus, the Aztec people

could recognize themselves in Mary, and she became one of them. In Vietnam, she appeared as Our Lady of La Vang, a Vietnamese woman; in Africa, as an African woman; in Belgium, as a blonde woman. Indeed, Mary has taken the shape, color, and form of almost every woman on this planet. This affirms that we’re each created in God’s image and that Jesus died for all of us.

Today, my entire house is filled with religious art. Many might think of it as more of a shrine than a home—old habits die hard. I have images of Mary from all around the world. In these Marian statues I see the face of Mary, the Mother of God and our heavenly mother. I also see the faces of all mothers.

Similarly, the diverse statues of Mary in our churches allow us to recognize ourselves in her. We are invited to become more like her by taking on her virtues.

As we celebrate Mary in May, may we learn from her and turn to her with our every need. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us! +

## PRAYER

*Lord, your Spirit renews  
our faith, hope, and love.  
Empower me to be your  
presence of love and  
compassion to others.*

—From *Hopeful Meditations for Every Day of  
Easter through Pentecost*, Rev. Warren J. Savage  
and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

May 24-29

**Monday, Blessed Virgin Mary:**  
Gn 3:9–15, 20 or Acts 1:12–14 / Jn  
19:25–34

**Tuesday, Weekday:**  
Sir 35:1–12 / Mk 10:28–31

**Wednesday, St. Philip Neri:**  
Sir 36:1, 4–5a, 10–17 / Mk 10:32–45

**Thursday, Weekday:**  
Sir 42:15–25 / Mk 10:46–52

**Friday, Weekday:**  
Sir 44:1, 9–13 / Mk 11:11–26

**Saturday, Weekday:**  
Sir 51:12cd–20 / Mk 11:27–33

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