

## MOTHER'S DAY

# Mary, the Ultimate Mother

On Mother's Day, here is an excerpt of Pope Francis message on the Feast of Mary, Mother of God on New Year's Day this year.

Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis  
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God  
1 January 2017

In Mary, the eternal Word not only became flesh, but also learned to recognize the maternal tenderness of God. With Mary, the God-Child learned to listen to the yearnings, the troubles, the joys and the hopes of the people of the promise. With Mary, he discovered himself a Son of God's faithful people.

In the Gospels, Mary appears as a woman of few words, with no great speeches or deeds, but with an attentive gaze capable of guarding the life and mission of her Son, and for this reason, of everything that he loves. She was able to watch over the beginnings of the first Christian community, and in this way she learned to be the mother of a multitude. She drew near to the most diverse situations in order to sow hope. She accompanied the crosses borne in the silence of her children's hearts. How many devotions, shrines and chapels in the most far-off places, how many pictures in our homes, remind us of this great truth. Mary gave us a mother's warmth, the warmth that shelters us amid troubles, the maternal warmth that keeps anything or anyone from extinguishing in the heart of the Church the revolution of tenderness inaugurated by her Son. Where there is a mother, there is tenderness. By her motherhood, Mary shows us that humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong. She teaches us that we do not have to mistreat others in order to feel important (cf. Evangelii Gaudium, 288). God's holy people has always acknowledged and hailed her as the Holy Mother of God.

To celebrate Mary as Mother of God and our mother means recalling a certainty that will accompany our days: we are a people with a Mother; we are not orphans. Mothers are the strongest antidote to our individualistic and egotistic tendencies, to our lack of openness and our indifference.

A society without mothers would not only be a cold society, but a society that has lost its heart, lost the "feel of home". A society without mothers would be a merciless society, one that has room only for calculation and speculation. Because mothers, even at the worst times, are capable of testifying to tenderness, unconditional self-sacrifice and the strength of hope. I have learned much from those mothers whose children are in prison, or lying in hospital beds, or in bondage to drugs, yet, come cold or heat, rain or draught, never stop fighting for what is best for them. Or those mothers who in



refugee camps even in the midst of war, unfailingly embrace and support their children's sufferings. Mothers who literally give their lives so that none of their children will perish. Where there is a mother, there is unity, there is belonging, belonging as children.

By recalling God's goodness in the maternal face of Mary, in the maternal face of the Church, in the faces of our own mothers, protects us from the corrosive disease of being "spiritual orphans". It is the sense of being orphaned that the soul experiences when it feels motherless and lacking the tenderness of God, when the sense of belonging to a family, a people, a land, to our God, grows dim. This sense of being orphaned lodges in a narcissistic heart capable of looking only to itself and its own interests. It grows when we forget that life is a gift we have received – and owe to others – a gift we are called to share in this common home.

It was such a self-centred orphanhood that led Cain to ask: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9). It was as if to say: he doesn't belong to me; I do not recognize him. This attitude of spiritual orphanhood is a cancer that silently eats away at and debases the soul. We become all the more debased, inasmuch as nobody belongs to us and we belong to no one.

The loss of the ties that bind us, so typical of our fragmented and divided culture, increases this sense of orphanhood and, as a result, of great emptiness and loneliness. The lack of physical (and not virtual) contact is cauterizing our hearts (cf. Laudato Si', 49) and making us lose the capacity for tenderness and wonder, for pity and compassion. Spiritual orphanhood makes us forget what it means to be children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, friends and believers. It makes us forget the importance of playing, of singing, of a smile, of rest, of gratitude.

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### MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm  
(Anticipated Mass)  
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm  
Monday – Wednesday 8am  
Thursday Mass/Novena:  
8am & 7pm  
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am  
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)  
Reconciliation  
Saturday: 4-4:45pm  
Adoration  
Saturday 9:30-10am  
Library Hours  
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

### STAFF

**Pastor**  
Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.  
**Associate Pastor**  
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.  
**Office Manager**  
Virginia Fong  
**Pastoral Coordinator**  
Bertilla Watanabe  
**Bookkeeper**  
Corinna Siy  
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### OLPH School Principal

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# OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

May 14, 2017

5th Sunday of Easter

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

This past week was certainly a busy one! Students from Grade 2 received their First Communion on Sunday, then just two days later, students from Grade 7 received the sacrament of Confirmation. It's not often that we have these sacraments scheduled within the same week. In this message, I will place the spotlight on our Grade 2s and PREP students who received their First Communion. You will hear more about Grade 7s and Confirmation (including photos) in next week's bulletin.

In summary, we had 49 OLPH and PREP students receiving Eucharist this year. It was obvious they were well-prepared by their teachers, Susie Beers, Annemarie Phipps and Elizabeth Scali. The PREP teachers involved were Sr. Roberta Mullin S.C., Mary Thompson and Elizabeth Towers, the PREP Coordinator.

I was impressed with the reverence that the children showed when they came up to receive Communion. The joy, excitement and open-hearted embrace these children had on receiving Communion for the first time was visible in their faces and demeanor. It is a reminder that we should all receive the Lord Jesus with the same spirit of welcome and anticipation that these children had. Every Eucharist is a reminder that Jesus died on the cross so that he could have an intimate encounter and eternal life with him.

Thus every Eucharist is an occasion to celebrate. The Grade 3 and 4 parents did a beautiful job of making the reception special for the children, families and friends. It was also great to see so many non-Catholic Grade 2 students come to support their friends receiving the sacraments.

We asked the Grade 2s how they felt after the Mass. One of the more forthright responses was from a student who said she felt happy because she got cake, presents and money! Those were just the things that were visible. How much more God has given us which were not visible! Let us pray that our children will continue to cherish the sacraments and attend Mass regularly with their parents.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R



Let your love be upon us Lord, even as we hope in you. - Psalm 33

## NEWS & NOTICES

**Last CWL meeting:** Ladies, our last meeting before the summer break is going to be a really fun gathering with party games, prizes and treats. In support of Domestic Abuse Services we would like to suggest you bring presents for donation to the Domestic Abuse Services Transition House. A list of suggested gift ideas can be found at <http://domesticabuseservices.ca/get-involved/donations-in-kind/>. See you at 7pm Wednesday May 17 in the Hall.

**PEC Meeting:** The next PEC Meeting is on Tuesday May 16 at 7pm in the Madonna Room.

**PEC Elections:** For the 2017/2018 school year, there are three vacancies - two to be filled by election (2-year terms) and one by Pastoral appointment (2-year term). Election Dates/Times: May 27 and May 28, 2017. Polling stations will be open for one hour after each Mass on these dates.

**Eligible for Nomination:** Practicing Catholics, 21 years and older and approved by the Pastor.  
**Eligible to Nominate:** Only persons eligible to hold office are eligible to nominate candidates.  
**Members of Nominating Committee:** Fr Babu Mathew, Renee Stafford and Kate Nemeth.  
**Pick-Up Forms:** Nomination forms available at the Parish office.  
**Nominating Committee Email:** [pec@olphbc.ca](mailto:pec@olphbc.ca) if you have any questions.  
**Deadline for completed forms (with all required signatures)** to be dropped off at the Parish Office: 4pm Wednesday May 17, 2017.

**PREP Pre-Registration:** The Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) is for elementary school aged children who are not attending Catholic school. Pre-registration for the 2017/2018 school year is now being accepted. Please contact Elizabeth Towers at 604-440-8809 or email [prep@olphbc.ca](mailto:prep@olphbc.ca) for information. You can also register on Tuesday May 16 which is the last day of this year's program.

**PREP Teachers & Teaching Assistants Needed:** Would you like to share your talents by helping out as a teacher or teaching assistant? PREP is for children Grades 1-7 who do not go to Catholic school but need to be educated in the Faith. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Towers at 604-440-8809 or email [prep@olphbc.ca](mailto:prep@olphbc.ca).

**Reclaim your dream and get married in the Church:** Would you like to get your marriage blessed so you can receive the sacraments? We can help you. On September 16, 2017, Archbishop Miller, CSB, will celebrate the blessing of marriages at St. Clare's Parish, Coquitlam for a large number of civilly married couples. Be a part of it. To learn more, check out our upcoming information session on May 17 at 6:30 p.m., at St. Francis de Sales, Burnaby, or May 31 at 6:30 p.m., at Our Lady of Good Counsel, Surrey. For more info, please contact Deacon Greg at 604-771-2975 or Jimmy at 778-378-5389.

**Birthright Vancouver:** Our annual fundraising WALK/RUN is on its way! We will meet at Holy Name Parish in Vancouver, walk around Queen Elizabeth Park and gather to eat. This year the event will also feature Dr. Willard Johnston, a strong advocate for life and a well received speaker who has contributed to the BC Catholic and Huffington Post. In the spirit of Canada's 150th, we are celebrating this Canadian-born international organization which supports women all over the world. Together we can help take the crisis out of crisis pregnancy!



## Stewardship Reflection

**"The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." -- 1 PETER 2:7**

Everyone is given unique gifts. Many people are able to recognize their talents and abilities, but there are many people who are unsure of their gifts. This may make them feel worthless. If you know someone who is struggling for a direction in life, give them a little encouragement. Help them discern how they might use their skills. No gift is too small or insignificant.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

## CALENDAR

### MAY

#### Six Dates for Couples

Drawing from the Beatitudes proclaimed by Jesus, this six-week program offers a faith-based perspective in dealing with and growing through situations that married couples experience in everyday life. Join Derek and Silvana Carr on Wednesdays, 7 - 8 pm through June 14<sup>th</sup>. Married 5 or 45 years, or engaged to be married, all are welcome. Let us know if, to attend the program, you need a child-minder. Please email Bertilla [bwatanabe@rcav.org](mailto:bwatanabe@rcav.org) to register.

#### Rosary Rally Downtown

Sunday May 21, 2016 @ 10:00 am – 11:00 am  
Vancouver Art Gallery (South Plaza, N. side of Robson St) 750 Hornby St Vancouver. Attendance is free.

Rosary Rally, in honour of the Most Holy Trinity and Our Lady. This year commemorates 100 years since the Fatima apparitions to the three children.

The group will be praying for the following intentions:

1. To make reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary
2. For the fulfillment of the consecration of Russia, as Our Lady requested
3. For all souls who have no-one to pray for them
4. That God's Law be upheld over the issue of euthanasia and abortion: "Thou shalt not kill".

### JUNE

#### Door Is Open

The next Door is Open outreach effort is on Tuesday June 6. The idea is to prepare lunch for the poor and homeless in Eastside Vancouver. We start at about 8am and finish at about 2:30pm on Tuesday Oct 13. If you would like to help, please put your name down on the sign-up sheet. We need about 25 volunteers.

## My First Communion

Children from Grades 2A and 2B shared their feelings about First Communion. Thank you to all who shared their feelings! Here are a selection of their responses.

**Maddie:** I felt closer to Jesus!

**Preston:** I felt contented because I was receiving Communion for the first time.

**Adriano:** I felt happy because I can receive Communion at Mass from now on.

**Gabriel:** I felt holy because I received the body of Jesus in me.

**Mairead:** I felt grown-up because my Mom, Dad and brother have all had their First Communion.

**Jaklyn:** I felt joyful because I received the body of Christ.

**Peter:** I felt very excited and happy

**Cate:** I felt happy, excited and special! It also made me feel grateful and happy.

**Natasha:** I felt very excited and grown-up!

**Xavier:** I was excited, and very happy and also a little nervous.

**Bettina:** I just felt different... it was clear for a moment. I love it!

**Olivia:** I just felt excited!

**Claire:** was excited, scared and happy! The feeling I had... it felt holy, holy and very happy!

**Sara:** I felt very happy to support my friends by being there!

**Mason:** It felt good!  
**Eric:** I felt calm and joyful!

**Sebastian:** I felt joy, happy and normal!!

**Alex:** I felt happy, special but also tired.

**Maria:** I was happy, nervous and excited.  
I also felt loved.

**Joaquin:** I felt special

**Jada:** I felt happy because I got cake, presents and money!!

**Anneke:** It was special to support my friends!

**Ray:** I felt happy!



## SACRAMENTS

