

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



Together with the Universal church we have received some wonderful news. Pope Francis has decreed that the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title of ***Mother of the Church***, be inserted into the Roman Calendar. The liturgical celebration, *Beata Mariae Virginis, Ecclesia Matris*, is to be celebrated annually, as a Memorial. From this year all the dioceses and parishes will celebrate this Feast the Monday following Pentecost. The Decree was released last Saturday by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. The Decree states:

“The joyous veneration given to the Mother of God by the contemporary Church, in light of reflection on the mystery of Christ and on his nature, cannot ignore the figure of a woman (cf. Gal 4:4), the Virgin Mary, who is both the Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church.

....She thus became the tender Mother of the Church which Christ begot on the cross handing on the Spirit. Christ, in turn, in the beloved disciple, chose all disciples as ministers of his love towards his Mother, entrusting her to them so that they might welcome her with filial affection.

Thus the foundation is clearly established by which Blessed Paul VI, on 21 November 1964, at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, declared the Blessed Virgin Mary as “Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother” and established that “the Mother of God should be further honored and invoked by the entire Christian people by this tenderest of titles”.

Having attentively considered how greatly the promotion of this devotion might encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety, Pope Francis has decreed that the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, should be inscribed in the Roman Calendar on the Monday after Pentecost and be now celebrated every year.

This celebration will help us to remember that growth in the Christian life must be anchored to the Mystery of the Cross, to the oblation of Christ in the Eucharistic Banquet and to the Mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the Redeemed, the Virgin who makes her offering to God”.

Fr. Sean