

FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are about a month away from celebrating the feast day of our parish! The Feast Day of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, was established in 2018 by Pope Francis to be celebrated every year on the Monday following Pentecost. This year, the feast is celebrated on Monday, May 20th.

The theological roots of this title of Our Lady go back to the early Church. The Fathers of the Church, any of about 70 theologians in the period from the 2nd to the 7th century whose writing established and confirmed official church doctrine, often spoke of Mary as the New Eve. Just as the Woman Eve was “the mother of all the living,” as described in Genesis 3:20, the Woman Mary was mother of all those living in Christ. In Revelation 12:17, St. John says that this Woman’s offspring are “those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus.”

What does the title ‘Mother of the Church’ mean? Well, Pope St. John Paul II said, “The title ‘Mother of the Church’ ... reflects the deep conviction of the

Christian faithful, who see in Mary not only the mother of the person of Christ, but also of the faithful. She who is recognized as mother of salvation, life and grace, mother of the saved and mother of the living, is rightly proclaimed Mother of the Church.”

The title ‘Mother of the Church’ is not found in Sacred Scripture, but Pope St. John Paul II covered several ways that the Bible alludes to this title. First, although the title ‘Mother of the Church’ was only recently attributed to Mary, it expresses the Blessed Virgin’s maternal relationship with the Church as shown already in several New Testament texts. Second, since the Annunciation, Mary was called to give her consent to the coming of the messianic kingdom, which would take place with the formation of the Church. Third, when at Cana Mary asked the Son to exercise his messianic power, she made a fundamental contribution to implanting the faith in the first community of disciples, and she co-operated in initiating God’s kingdom, which has its ‘seed’ and ‘beginning’ in the Church.

With this feast day, the Church specifically recalls Mary’s receiving of the Holy Spirit with the Apostles at Pentecost, as well as her longing to protect all who come to her Son in His Holy Church. The many mysteries of Jesus’ life that Mary pondered were brought to full understanding in her heart at Pentecost. As the Church was fully established in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, strengthening the Lord’s followers to believe in and to proclaim the Gospel, the Blessed Mother was there as the leading example of what it means to fully say yes to Jesus. Our feast day is an invitation for each of us to receive more from Mary’s example of holiness and from the grace of her Son that she offers us. Let us not be afraid to ask her prayers for ourselves and for the whole Church: O Mary, Mother of Christ, and Mother of the Church, pray for us that we might be made worthy of the promises of your Son!

With that being said, it is necessary to properly celebrate our feast day as a parish! We will for sure have a mass at 6:30 pm that evening. But, let us prepare something to honor Mary before or after mass. Have you participated in past years, or do you have any ideas on how to celebrate? Scan the QR code or find the link on the front page of the parish website (www.motherofthechurch.org) for a quick survey and to submit your answers.



Peace,