



MARY'S MONTH – MAY

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



For centuries, Catholics have set aside the month of May as a time to honor Mary, the Mother of Jesus. During this month, there are two separate days when she is honored: on May 13th as Our Lady of Fatima, and on May 31st the Church celebrates the Visitation when Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth. It is also important for us to know that there are misconceptions out there accusing Catholics of worshipping Mary. Simply put, as Catholics we honor Mary.

As the Mother of God, Mary has a unique position among the saints. She is exalted but she is still one of us. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close tie, she has the dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God. Because of this very special gift, she is a special creature both in heaven and on earth. One of the documents from Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, tells us that she belongs to the offspring of Adam, and she is one with all those who are to be saved.

Throughout the centuries, the Church has turned to the Blessed Virgin in order to come closer to Christ. Many forms of piety toward the Mother of God developed that help bring us closer to Jesus, her Son. In these devotions to Mary while she is honored, the Son, through whom all things have their being, is rightly known, loved and glorified. The Church honors her as the Mother of God, looks to her as a model of perfect discipleship, and asks for her prayers to God on our behalf.

Perhaps during this month, praying the Rosary would be something new or different for some of us to take part in. There are numerous resources about how to pray the Rosary available, if needed. Look at the example of our beloved Pope Francis who requested he be buried outside the Vatican at the Church of St. Mary Major because of his great love and devotion to Our Lady.

"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!"

Have a Mary filled, prayerful, and peaceful week ahead!