

## ***My Soul Proclaims the Greatness of the Lord...***



On the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe we celebrate Mary's own words in her great prayer, the *Magnificat* – “all generations will call me blessed” (Lk 1:48). When we *venerate* Mary, the Church comes together to praise God for what He has accomplished in his Mother and at the same time to imitate her as a model of faith and virtue. Mary, the Mother of Christ, shows us how to love God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In her *fiat*, Mary's yes to God (“be it done to me according to thy word” (Lk 1:38)), Mary gives her consent to be the Mother of God. At the foot of the cross, she gives her consent to be our Mother-Teacher. She is then our best model for right relationship with God. In our veneration of her, we are looking to Mary for her help and example.

### ***Mary our Mother***

We all need a mother's love. This love is found in a particular way in Mary, the mother of the universal church. Venerable Fulton Sheen once said, “Just as Christ was formed in her, so must we be formed in her. Only she who raised Christ can raise a Christian.” This relationship of maternal care endures today in the heart of everyone who welcomes Mary as mother. In our prayer to Mary, the *Hail Mary*, we acknowledge and praise God for his work through Mary as Mother of the Redeemer (“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you...”).

### ***Mary our Intercessor***

Has someone ever asked you, “Please pray for me”? We find strength through the prayers of others. In praying to our Blessed Mother, we are doing just that – we are asking Mary to pray with and for us in her maternal role in heaven. Specifically, in the second part of the *Hail Mary*, we seek Mary's maternal intercession for ourselves, and the members of the Body of Christ the Church (“Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners...”). In this prayer through our Blessed Mother, we trust that Mary presents our prayers to her Son on our behalf, asking for His divine love and mercy.

### ***Mary our Model for Spiritual Growth***

All saints give praise to God through their lives. Mary, as queen of all saints, is the perfect role model of holiness, and faithfulness to God. Throughout her *Magnificat* she proclaims the greatness of God. Mary teaches us humble trust that God keeps His promises. He is with us in our brokenness, working to bring about His will in our lives. He is always ready to show us His mercy.

Mary's prayer of praise is also a foreshadowing of the life of happiness that Jesus promises in living the Beatitudes. Speaking of Mary, Pope Francis says “she lived the Beatitudes of Jesus as none other...she teaches the way of holiness and walks ever at our side” (*Rejoice and Be Glad*, 176). Mary, as the first and best disciple, teaches us how to strive to grow in holiness through an intimate relationship with her Son.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.  
For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
He has mercy on those who fear him  
In every generation.  
He has shown the strength of his arm,  
He has scattered the proud in their conceit.  
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich he has sent away empty.  
He has come to the help of his servant, Israel,  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy  
the promise he made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children forever.

*Liturgy of the Hours, Luke 1:46-55*

*On this feast day, may we proclaim the greatness of the Lord as we embrace our blessed mother and walk with her, under her mantle, towards Christ.*