

January 1, 2017 - Solemnity of Mary - Cycle A
Fr. Larry Richards

Good Morning. Audience: Good Morning.

How Are You? Audience: Blessed

This past week I got to go up to Montreal, Father Nick and I went to St. Joseph's Oratory to get some oil, it was very bad snow, we had to come back early and it snowed all the way back, we were coming back Thursday night and it was horrendous, but one of the realities is that we got to go to Notre Dame in Old Montreal, and if you have never been there, it's, if not **the** most, one of the most beautiful churches in the world. You walk into this beautiful church and at the very top with all the blue and everything is Jesus and the Father crowning Our Blessed Mother as Queen of the World. And the church comes every year and we start the year with Mary. Why? Because everything began with Mary. Salvation, history began with Mary. Her yes to the Father's will. You know as Mother Theresa used to say, "No Mary, no Jesus". That all of salvation came down to the free will of a woman who said yes to God, she could have said "no" because the greatest gift after existence God gives us is free will. So she had the freedom to say "no" but she said "yes". Because of her yes, the second person of the Trinity took on flesh and we call that union of the Divinity and humanity, Jesus Christ.

So everything begins with Mary. So it must be that way in our own lives that God choose to need Mary, right? Some of us don't think we need her. If you don't think you need her, you make yourself better than Jesus Christ, correct? You know Jesus needed Mary to change his diaper, is that correct? He didn't sit there and come out and say, "Ok, I'll change my own diaper, thank you Mother." He had to have someone change his diaper; he needed to be fed by her. If Mary would not have fed him, he would have died. He needed his mother for the basic things, to teach him how to walk in his humanity, to teach him all these things. It was Mary who formed Jesus and for us, it needs to be Mary who forms us.

We need to take ourselves and place ourselves under her protection as we begin this New Year. Again, sometimes, people, when I do weddings and that, I do a whole thing on Mary and how she is our Mother, and I say some people think we

worship statues, we worship the Blessed Mother, which is such garbage, really, I am going to worship a statue, do you think that's the kind of person I am, or we are going to worship someone who is not God, who is 100% human, I am going to worship her, Stop it! You know but again, I have a picture of my mother in my wallet, I don't know if you have pictures of your mothers, you don't have wallets, some of you are women, but whatever, you carry them in your purse, and if anyone was to sit there and spit on that picture of my mother, what do you think I would do? I would beat them, in a gentle kind compassionate way, knowing that they are not spitting on my mother, but they are desecrating something that I have to remind me. So our statues and everything else are here to remind us of the saints, to remind us of our Mother, but they are nothing in themselves. It's what they represent.

So again, with Mary the best we can do, is we can sit there and we can say she's like putting on a pair of glasses, right? My cheaters that I need when my sugar's bad, ha ha, right now my sugar's bad, so I can see much better. But anyway, so you put the cheaters on, you don't get stuck on the glass, you look through it to see something better. Nobody looked at Jesus as much as Mary did, and so we use her to focus on Jesus more.

So again we need to make sure that we go to her, so first of as I did about 5 years ago, I encouraged everybody to say a rosary every day in the new year, Some of you did it, some of you didn't, some of you continued it. But if you haven't, I want you to make sure you do that for this year, 2017. If you decide you're going to say a rosary every day, now again, with the rosary, it's all scriptural, most of it; the first half is scripture, right? When we say "Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." Who said that? The Angel Gabriel. It's the exact words taken from the gospel. So it's God's words, not ours, it's God's words repeating. And then we do the second half, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

And again, we can go to Mary and ask her to pray for us. If you don't believe in the intercession of the saints, then don't ask anybody to pray for you. Right? Because, oh they are taking the place of God. Oh excuse me, so don't ever come to me and say "Father would you pray for me?" I can't, because I'm taking the place of God. If you can ask anybody on this earth to give you things, then you

can ask Mary, because Mary sees the face of God. She's alive. So you go to her and say "Mom, can you pray for me" and she can pray for you. "Mom, can you do stuff for me" and she can do things for us, because of Jesus, right. And so I encourage you to sit there and decide to start saying the rosary. That's why we say the rosary before mass. Everything begins with Mary so that's what we do and again to go to her for things.

I can't tell you....remember a couple years ago when we found that spot in my lung and then in 5 months, it doubled in size and then Dr. McGovern sat there and said "oh Father, it's not good." Really, and then I had to go get the stuff and then I came over here and I knelt down and I said the mini novena, 10 memoraries and then Dr. McGovern, a parishioner, called me on the phone, my birthday, jumping up and down the other side, saying Father there's nothing there, there's nothing there, there's nothing there. I can't tell you how many times I went to Our Lady, how many people who were far from God that I put them in Our Lady's arms and I've never lost anyone that I put in Our Lady. People are struggling in marriages and different things and I say start saying the rosary as a family. Start coming together as a couple. Start doing things, ask our Lady to pray for you. And Our Lady prays for them and the miracles that happen.

Don't try to live this year alone. Do it with the help of your Mother. She's here to form you and protect you as she formed and protected Jesus. Don't ever worry as we hear that we are ever going to love Mary too much. You will never love her as much as Jesus loved her. I promise! So this year, don't do it alone, do it with the help of Our Mother. You got it? Get it? Gonna do it? Oh you better! May each of you His love today and forever. Amen.