



---

## *Seek the Lord*

---

ARCHBISHOP DENNIS M. SCHNURR

Many families annually prepare a special May Altar in their homes to honor the Blessed Mother. This space, set aside with an image or statue of Mary and decorated with flowers and candles, is just one example of the various ways in which Catholics show their devotion to the Mother of God during the month of May. It is the season of May Crownings and Rosary processions. Others will participate in devotions of Marian Consecration either alone or in small groups. For some, it is a fitting time to read a book on Mary's virtues or of meditations on her life. In all these ways and more, this month is an opportunity to grow closer to Mary in prayer and to learn from her how to be a better disciple of her Son.

It is appropriate to set aside May, in particular, to honor Mary. The world around us is speaking of new life: trees have leafed out once more, flowers are blooming, and gardens and crops are being planted with the hope of a fruitful harvest. Through her faithful "Yes" to God's plan for her life, Mary also brought new life into the world with the birth of Jesus. He would go on to make possible the restoration of a world wounded by sin to the original beauty and order it had at the beginning of creation.

Shortly after being elected, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on his predecessor, Pope St. John Paul II, calling Mary the "Woman of the Eucharist." In the month of May, surrounded by the beauty of the Vatican gardens, the Holy Father addressed a small group of pilgrims who had just finished a Rosary procession. He said Mary was a "'Woman of the Eucharist' through and through, beginning with her inner disposition: from the Annunciation, when she offered herself

for the Incarnation of the Word of God, to the Cross and to the Resurrection; 'Woman of the Eucharist' in the period subsequent to Pentecost, when she received in the Sacrament that Body which she had conceived and carried in her womb" (*Address During the Prayer Meeting in the Vatican Gardens for the Conclusion of the Marian Month of May, May 31, 2005*).

Pope Benedict went on to remind the pilgrims that, "Mary, living Tabernacle of God made flesh, is the Ark of the Covenant in whom the Lord visited and redeemed his people." The presence of Jesus within her filled her with the Holy Spirit and the joy which only He can give. That is also the joy of the Church: "Welcoming Jesus and bringing Him to others is the true joy of Christians!"

Mary, like any good mother, teaches us many things. Most importantly she teaches us that the fullness of life, which we all desire, comes from closeness to Christ and following Him faithfully. Mary said "Yes" to the Archangel Gabriel, and she conceived by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, when we as believers say "Amen" before receiving the Eucharist, we are professing our faith in the Real Presence of the Lord who comes to dwell within us. Mary's life became caught up in the mystery of redemption through childbearing the Son of God. Our lives, too, if we are open to the transforming power of the Eucharist, can likewise be used by God to renew the world in love.

May Mary, the Woman of the Eucharist, intercede for us so that, welcoming her Son into our lives, we may follow Him and conform ourselves ever more to His holy will!