

From the Pastor

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In the Sunday liturgy of the Catholic Church we are given, in present time, the opportunity to reflect more on the meaning of the Eucharist in our lives. Jesus continues to teach us about this great sacrament of His presence. The Eucharist is truly the center of our Christian life. Without it we can't really be united with God. This was His will as He had planned our salvation.

I would like, however, to reflect on the second most important factor of our Catholic faith. And that is the role our Lord gave to His Mother, Blessed Virgin Mary. She is directly connected to the Eucharist as a reminder of our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross. It is from the Cross, before He gave His last breath, Jesus gave His Apostle John His own Mother as a mother of all humankind, the New Eve, who fully cooperated with God's plan.

The Catholic Church venerates the Blessed Virgin, not because of some idea someone could have had centuries ago about her importance in our faith, but because it has been the will of Christ, her Son. We faithfully follow that will and place Holy Mary as our greatest intercessor and supporter. The influence of the Blessed Virgin in the history of the Church is amazing. I could mention just her many apparitions all over the world, her many miracles, or how so many saints and historically recognized great leaders found in her their strength and success in their particular mission.

I would like to share with you just one fact about the role the Blessed Virgin played in one point of the history of Poland. It is very much connected to the Solemnity of Her Assumption to Heaven which we celebrate this week. When Poland regained its independence after World War I, it still was threatened by some outside powers. The most powerful was the newly born Soviet Union. Polish eastern borders were established by war treaties but the Soviet communist government didn't want to respect them. In 1920 Polish borders were crossed by Bolshevik's army and the Polish army which had been just forming in the past two years had real difficulty stopping their advance. The situation got really serious when in 1921 the Soviet army was just miles from Warsaw. And this was the time of the Polish people's great plea to the Blessed Virgin - to save Poland from the disaster. Strategically we almost lost that war. The enemy was about to capture the capitol of Poland. And the Blessed Virgin helped. The Polish army miraculously stopped Bolshevik's advance, and turned around the outcome of the war. It happened exactly on August 15th, the Solemnity of the Assumption. Since then this day has become a national holiday of Poland, to commemorate the "Miracle near Vistula River" attributed to the Blessed Virgin.

This is just one fact. There are hundreds more like that from all over the world. Once I was told while in seminary that no priest should go on his mission without Blessed Virgin Mary. She will be his strength, protection, and way to better commitment and love to her Son Jesus Christ. And I believe that. Whenever I underestimate her influence I face more stress than usual. When I am close to her things are just generally better. May the glory and love of our Blessed Mother be always in our hearts and minds.

+ Father Roger