

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...”

These words of the Blessed Virgin Mary have become a common refrain of the whole Church every evening in the Liturgy of the Hours. And there's good reason for this! These words show us just who Mary is. Mary is the one who lived her life in total obedience to the will of God. Mary is the one who never turned away from that holy will of God, not even in the smallest way. Mary is the one whose only concern is to glorify God, to proclaim the greatness of the Lord. It should be no wonder, then, that Holy Mother Church looks to Mary as the model of the Christian life and the one for whom every Christian should have great love and devotion.

Blessed Mary is the model for us of how God calls each of us to live. The Lord desires that our hearts should burn for Him and for Him alone. Remember the words of the greatest commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all you soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” Nothing gives God more glory than when we turn to Him with all our hearts. This is why Mary is our model - she did nothing but turn her heart to the Lord. Every breath of her life was dedicated to loving and serving God. And so we strive to imitate her Immaculate (her sinless) Heart.

But Mary is more than just a model for us; she is also our Holy Mother. Mary is not some far off ideal of Christian who lived 2,000 years ago and who has no bearing on our lives. No!

She is our mother! She cares for us like any mother cares for her child - with tenderness and mercy and compassion. But since she is a perfect mother, a mother without sin, her care for us, her love for us is also perfect. And like any mother she wants what is best for her children - she wants us to be close to her Son, Jesus.

This is why devotion and love for Mary is so important to our Christian life. She is not just a model for us of how to live, she is also a mother who takes us by the hand and leads us on the path to her Son. And because she is a perfect mother, she will never distract us from this goal. There is no need for us to worry that Mary could be a distraction for us in seeking the Lord - she will always point us to Jesus. There is no need to worry that we could begin to love Mary too much, for we will never love her more than Jesus does! This is why we should turn to her so often in our prayers - in the Hail Mary, in the Rosary, in the Memorare - because every step we take toward Mary, every prayer she offers for us, brings us one step closer to Jesus.

As we celebrate this great feast of the Assumption when Mary was taken up - body and soul - into heaven, our Blessed Mother shows us the destiny of every Christian - to live forever with God in heaven. Let us turn to her to be our model and our mother. May our Blessed Mother take us by the hand and lead us to the feet of her Son, Jesus, who is seated upon His heavenly throne.