



## From the Deacon's Desk

Pope Francis has a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary as “Mary Undoer of Knots.” Mary has over 55 titles, so you’re excused if you don’t recognize this one.

An 18<sup>th</sup>-century painting inspired this modern devotion. It is the artist’s reflection of a quote from St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons in 180 CE who said: “... *the knot of Eve’s disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, this did the virgin Mary set free through faith*”.

Pope Francis saw the painting while he was studying in Germany, purchased a postcard of the painting, and brought the devotion to Argentina in the early 1980s. The painting has seven areas/images to contemplate:



1. The Holy Spirit is with Mary
2. The angels of heaven
3. Mary’s foot on the snake’s knotted head [Gen 3:15]
4. Standing on a crescent moon – used when depicting Mary under the title of the Immaculate Conception
5. Angel is handing Mary a long strip of cloth with many individual knots. The end of the cloth is not visible – there is no end of knots she is asked to “undo.”
6. This angel is collecting the cloth strip with the knots removed
7. There is some disagreement over the meaning of this image. It’s a guardian angel and someone on a journey. Who the person is and where they are going is open to interpretation by the person viewing it.

After reflecting on the painting, name the specific struggle you’re having and offer it to

Mary using this prayer:

*“In your hands there is no knot that cannot be undone. Powerful Mother, by your grace and intercessory power with Your Son and My Liberator, Jesus, take into your hands today this knot”.*

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