

*Homily of Card. Gérald Lacroix
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Today's Liturgy allows us to reflect once again on the great gift that the Virgin Mary, the Savior's mother is to us, disciples of Jesus, a gift to the Church as we journey in life.

Saint John the Evangelist recalls the words of Jesus and inscribes them in his Gospel because he was there when Jesus pronounced them: "*Woman, behold, your son.*" Then he said to the disciple, "*Behold, your mother.*" And from that hour the disciple took her into his home."

While this verse shows how Jesus cares for his mother, it does more than that. It shows how Jesus is forming a new family from all those who put their trust in Him. If you trust Christ, this is your family – a family that is created by shared faith in the crucified Christ and resurrected Lord.

When suffering seems to take hold of the situation and the temptation is to enclose oneself up in pain and buckle the heart out of desolation, the Lord, who promised not to leave us orphans, comes out to meet us and says to us: "*here is your mother*"; and, as we receive her in our homes and communities, at work and on the roads we travel, in prisons and in a hospital ward, we disciples of all times want to harbor her courage to stand "firmly on our feet" and live out our mission and offer our lives to serve our brothers and sisters, as Jesus said.

How valuable is this invitation amid the pandemic we are experiencing! In difficult times, the Lord gives us His Mother, nothing less than his own mother, as a companion and a guide.

The Eucharist is not something, it is Someone: Jesus Christ. We could say that Mary is the mother of the Eucharist, she is a eucharistic woman. She gave birth to the Son of God.

Saint John Paul II describes this beautifully in his encyclical on the Eucharist:

"Mysterium fidei! If the Eucharist is a mystery of faith which so greatly transcends our understanding as to call for sheer abandonment

to the Word of God, then there can be no one like Mary to act as our support and guide in acquiring this disposition.

In repeating what Christ did at the Last Supper in obedience to his command: 'Do this in memory of me!', we also accept Mary's invitation to obey him without hesitation: 'Do whatever he tells you' (Jn 2:5). With the same maternal concern which she showed at the wedding feast of Cana, Mary seems to say to us: 'Do not waver; trust in the words of my Son. If he was able to change water into wine, he can also turn bread and wine into his body and blood, and through this mystery bestow on believers the living memorial of his passover, thus becoming the 'bread of life'.'¹

In a few hours, we will participate in the opening celebrations of the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest.

Let us thank the Lord for the gift of His Mother; a woman of the Eucharist. The last time she is mentioned in Holy Scripture is when she accompanied the apostles and the disciples in the Upper Room, waiting for Pentecost, praying "with one accord". May she continue to accompany us in these challenging times. We want to follow Jesus and be faithful to the mission entrusted to us. We want to allow God to conform, transform, restore our lives to Christ, putting ourselves at the school of his Mother and allowing her to accompany us.

Like the disciples of Jesus in the Upper Room with Mary, here we are on the hilltop of a very historical and holy "upper room", where for over 1000 years, a pilgrim people have lived and proclaimed the Christian faith. With "one accord" let us pray for the faithful People of God of this country of Hungary, that so generously welcomes us and for each of our local Churches and countries. The Lord can accomplish the miracle of bringing us every day closer in unity and in charity, because in Him are all our springs!

Notes

¹ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 54.