

## May: The Month of Mary

“As the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary has a unique position among the saints, indeed, among all creatures. She is exalted, yet still one of us.

Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved. (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 53)

“Mary embraces God’s will and freely chooses to cooperate with God’s grace, thereby fulfilling a crucial role in God’s plan of salvation. Throughout the centuries, the Church has turned to the Blessed Virgin in order to come closer to Christ. Many forms of piety toward the Mother of God developed that help bring us closer to her Son. In these devotions to Mary, ‘while the Mother is honored, the Son, through whom all things have their being and in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, is rightly known, loved and glorified and . . . all His commands are observed’ (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 66). The Church honors her as the Mother of God, looks to her as a model of perfect discipleship, and asks for her prayers to God on our behalf.”<sup>1</sup>

“Popular piety dedicates the month of May to the Blessed Virgin Mary.”<sup>2</sup> “Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary deserves special attention because it is such an important part of worship in the United States. The United States of America is under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception.”<sup>3</sup>

“The various forms of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary reflect the many different cultures, religious convictions, and popular sensibilities that make up the Church in the United States. Catholic people of all cultures have a deep love for the Mother of God. They employ many different expressions of that love to show the one faith that characterizes their particular prayer life and spirituality.”<sup>4</sup>

### Notes

- 1 Excerpt from “Why Does Mary Have a Special Role in Helping Us?” *Popular Devotional Practices: Basic Questions and Answers* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB], 2003), no. 7.
- 2 Excerpt from *Essential Guide to Saints and Seasons* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2013), 127.
- 3 Excerpt from *National Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2005), 154.
- 4 Excerpt from *National Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2005), 155.

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