

## Mary, Mother of God

Today is traditionally a day of resolution-making. So, on the feast of Mary, the Mother of God, I would like to suggest some Mary-inspired resolutions.

**Be open to God's will.** In our first Scriptural encounter with Mary we meet a young Jewish girl who says "yes" to God's strange request, even without total understanding. Her response was one of complete trust and courage. She didn't say, "Who me? Why me? What will people think?" She said, "Yes." She believed she had gifts that were being called upon and she had the courage to be open to God's will for her. In that regard, she is the first to practice stewardship. She knew she had been gifted and called, though unsure exactly how, and so she put her gifts at the service of God, returning to God what she had received. Exercise the same openness to God's will when your gifts are called upon, even if you feel too busy or too afraid. Trust and the power of the Spirit will support you.

**Be a Christ-bearer to the world.** One of the titles given to Mary is *theotokos*, which in Greek means, "God-bearer." She is the bearer of God made flesh for the world. We, too, bear Christ's spirit in us and share him with the world through our presence, our love and our service. This year, do your Christ-bearing more consciously and each time recognize Christ being reborn in you and your love and actions.

**Be attentive to the needs of others.** At the Wedding Feast of Cana, Mary was the one who noted the depletion of the wine, and she was the one who something about it. Sensitive to others, she did not shrink from taking responsibility when she saw a need that she could help meet. Use that same sensitivity, attentiveness and leadership in your own home, neighborhood and society.

**Be compassionate toward those who suffer.** Mary at the foot of the cross was the epitome of compassion. She is also the compassionate companion of every sorrowful person who has experienced a loss, suffered sickness, heartache and pain. This year, when you are called upon to stand at the foot of those countless crosses of others, open yourself to share their pain with loving compassion.

**Be open to the call of the Spirit.** In the story of Pentecost we find Mary and the other disciples being empowered by Christ's Spirit to become the Church. In that upper room they understood what it means to bring Christ's life, care, concern, attention, compassion and hope to others. Place yourself next to Mary in that room, open yourself to the Spirit and better understand what living your baptismal call means. We are initiated into church to make a difference in the world through our discipleship.

I wish you peace on this first day of the year. May our resolutions, whatever they are, contribute to a holy and grace-filled year for all of us.