

Pastoral Council
Thoughts for Reflection
June 19, 2016

Why We Love Mary

The other day I was watching a video in which a young nun was talking about her spiritual journey. She said she had experienced a period during which she was not moving forward, not progressing spiritually, and she had wondered why not.

This probably seemed like a bigger problem to her than it might to one of us who haven't dedicated our lives to Jesus to quite the same degree. For us, we might just get busier with the business of living, devote ourselves to our family, friends, and work, and let the spiritual stuff lie until some large crisis calls us back. But for her, married only to Jesus Christ, it was quite a crisis in the moment.

"How can I, personally, be the bride of Christ?" she asked. "I can't, not in and of myself," and her lack of spiritual growth was proving it. One day, it dawned on her that the problem was precisely that she had been relying on her own will. On her own, she had no ability to attain the kind relationship with God that she had been hoping for. And then she realized something that she had known all along but had somehow misplaced: that Jesus wills us to love Him. The divine will, if we let it, pulls us more deeply into relationship with Him.

Not just as a matter of course, mind you, like some religious words droning on about God's general desire for mankind. What the Sister realized was that because God willed it, she could let go of her own will in the matter, which wasn't strong enough in the first place. This applies to everyone: All we have to do is allow God's action to work in us.

The Apostle John wrote it this way: "We love because He first loved us." Our very best efforts won't be good enough, but God's efforts are perfect.

I like to look at the statue of Mary in the Marion Chapel at the back of our church. She looks so very desirous that we come to know her and, even more, that we should come to know her Son. She looks like she is ready to move heaven itself so that we can come to love Jesus, because she knows who He is and how much He loves us.

And that is the truth about Mary, and why we love her so, and why St. Mary's is named in honor of her. And that is why we love Jesus: because He gave His very life, out of love for us, so that we might have eternal life with Him.