

## Reflection Monday Week 8 – Mary, Mother of the Church (2018) 2021

Pope Francis: In the Gospel, Mary is always described as “the Mother of Jesus,” instead of “the Lady” or “the widow of Joseph”: her motherliness is emphasized throughout the Gospels, beginning with the Annunciation. This quality was noted immediately by the Fathers of the Church and also applied to the Church.

The Church is feminine, because it is “*church*” and “*bride*”. And she is mother; she gives life. Bride and Mother. The Fathers go further saying that even your soul is the bride of Christ and mother. This attitude, that comes from Mary who is Mother of the Church, helps us understand this feminine dimension of the Church. When it is not there, the Church loses its identity and becomes a charitable organization or a football team, or whatever, but not the Church.

Only a feminine Church will be able to have “*fruitful attitudes,*” in accordance with the intention of God, who chose “*to be born of a woman in order to teach us the path of woman.*”

The important thing is that the Church be a woman, that has the attitude of a bride and of a mother. When we forget this, it is a masculine Church. Without this dimension, it sadly becomes a church of old bachelors, who live in isolation, incapable of love, incapable of fecundity. Without this femininity, the Church does not advance—because she is a woman. And this attitude of woman comes from Mary, because Jesus willed it so.

A distinguishing virtue of a woman is tenderness; like the tenderness of Mary, when she “*gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.*” She cared for Him, with meekness and humility, which are the great virtues of mothers.

The Church as mother walks with tenderness. It knows the language of caresses, of silence, of the gaze that knows compassion, that knows silence. It is a soul, a person who lives this way of being a member of the Church, knowing that he or she is like a mother traveling along the same path: a person who is gentle, tender, smiling, and full of love.

- Mothers: When your mother’s voice is so loud even your neighbours brush their teeth and get dressed!!!!
- Child to Dad: “What’s a man?”  
Dad: “A man is someone who is responsible and cares for their family.”  
Child: “I hope one day I can be a man just like mom!”