

Some suggested writings reading on Mary, our model of Hope.

Mary's Hope

TAKEN FROM [THE GLORIES OF MARY](#)

by [Saint Alphonsus Liguori](#)

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Hope takes its rise in faith; for God enlightens us by faith to know His goodness and the promises He has made, that by this knowledge we may rise by hope to the desire of possessing Him. Mary then, having had the virtue of faith in its highest degree, had also hope in the same degree of excellence; and this made her say with David, *But it is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord God.* [Ps. 72:28]

Mary was indeed that faithful spouse of the Holy Ghost, of whom it was said, *Who is this that cometh up from the desert, lowing with delights, leaning on her beloved?* [Cant. 8:5] For she was always perfectly detached from earthly affection, looking upon the world as a desert, and therefore in no way relying either on

creatures or on her own merits, but relying only on Divine grace, in which was all her confidence, she always advanced in the love of God. Thus Ailgrino said of her: "She ascended from the desert, that is, from the world, which she so fully renounced, and so truly considered as a desert, that she turned all her affections from it. She leant upon her Beloved, for she trusted not in her own merits, but in His graces Who bestows graces."

The most holy Virgin gave a clear indication of the greatness of her confidence in God, in the first place, when she saw the anxiety of her holy spouse St. Joseph. Unable to account for her wonderful pregnancy, he was troubled at the thought of leaving her; *but Joseph ... minded to put her away privately*. [Matt. 1:19] It appeared then necessary, as we have elsewhere remarked, that she should discover the hidden mystery to St. Joseph; but no, she would not herself manifest the grace she had received; she thought it better to abandon herself to Divine Providence, in the full confidence that God Himself would defend her innocence and reputation. This is precisely what Cornelius à Lapide says, in his commentary on the words of the Gospel quoted above:

"The Blessed Virgin was unwilling to reveal this secret to Joseph, lest she might seem to boast of her gifts; she therefore resigned herself to the care of God, in the fullest confidence that He would guard her innocence and reputation."

Mary again showed her confidence in God when she knew that the time for the birth of our Lord approached, and was yet driven even from the lodgings of the poor in Bethlehem, and obliged to bring forth in a stable: and she laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn. [Luke 2:7] She did not then let drop a single word of complaint, but abandoning herself to God, she trusted that He would be there assist her.

The Divine Mother also showed how great was her confidence in Divine Providence when she received notice from St. Joseph that they must fly into Egypt. On that very night she undertook so long a journey to a strange and unknown country without provisions, without money, accompanied only by her infant Jesus and her poor spouse, *who arose and took the Child and His Mother by night, and retired into Egypt.* [Matt. 2:14]

But much more did she show her confidence when she asked her Son for wine at the marriage-feast of Cana; for when she had said, *They have no wine*, Jesus answered her, *Woman, what is it to thee and to Me? My hour is not yet come*. [John 2:3] After this answer, which seemed an evident refusal, her confidence in the Divine goodness was such that she desired the servants to do whatever her Son told them; for the favor was certain to be granted: *Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye*. It indeed was so: Jesus Christ ordered the vessels to be filled with water, and changed it into wine.

Let us, then, learn from Mary to have that confidence in God which we ought always to have, but principally in the great affair of our eternal salvation---an affair in which it is true that we must cooperate; yet it is from God alone that we must hope for the grace necessary to obtain it. We must distrust our own strength, and say with the Apostle, *I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me*. [Phil. 4:13]

Ah, my most holy Lady, the Ecclesiasticus tells me that

thou art the *Mother of holy hope*; [24:24] and the holy Church, that thou art our hope. For what other hope, then, need I seek? Thou, after Jesus, art all my hope. Thus did St. Bernard call thee; thus will I also call thee: "Thou art the whole ground of my hope;" and, with St. Bonaventure, I will repeat again and again, "O salvation of all who call upon thee, save me!"

(from ["The Hope of Mary" – Catholic Tradition](#))

Teacher of faith



By faith, Mary penetrated into the Mystery of God One and Three in a way granted to no other creature. And as “mother of our faith,”^[9] she has made us sharers in that knowledge. “We can never hope to fathom this inexpressible mystery; nor will we ever be able to give sufficient thanks to our Mother for bringing us into such intimacy with the Blessed Trinity.”^[10]

Our Lady is Teacher of faith. Every aspect of faith in Christian life finds its prototype in Mary: being faithful to God and viewing the circumstances of ordinary life in the light of faith, even in moments of obscurity. Our Mother teaches us to be totally open to the divine will “even though it is mysterious, and often does not correspond with their own wishes, and is a sword that pierces their soul, as the elderly Simeon would say prophetically to Mary when Jesus was presented in the Temple (cf. *Lk2:35*).”^[11] Her complete trust in God's faithfulness and in his promises never wavers, even when the Lord's words were difficult or apparently impossible to accept.

Therefore, “if our faith is weak, we should turn to Mary.”^[12] Amid the darkness of the Cross, our Lady's faith and docility yields an unexpected fruit. “In the person of John, Christ is entrusting all men to his Mother, and especially his disciples: those who

were to believe in him."[13] Mary's motherhood extends to Christ's whole Mystical Body. Jesus gives us his Mother as our mother; he places us under her care, and offers us her intercession. Therefore the Church constantly invites the faithful to turn with particular devotion to Mary.

Our weakness is not an obstacle to grace. God takes it into account; that's why he has given us a mother. "In the struggle which the disciples must confront—all of us, all the disciples of Jesus, we must face this struggle—Mary does not leave them alone: the Mother of Christ and of the Church is always with us. She walks with us always, she is with us . . . Mary accompanies us, struggles with us, sustains Christians in their fight against the forces of evil."[14]

In the school of faith, our Lady is the best teacher, for she always had an attitude of trust, of openness, of supernatural outlook, no matter what happened around her. *Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.*[15] "Let us try to imitate her, talking to our Lord, conversing like two people in love about everything that happens to us, even the most insignificant incidents. Nor should we forget that we have to weigh them, consider their value, and see them with the eyes of faith, in order to discover the Will of God."[16]

Mary's path of faith, although certainly different in many ways, is also similar to that of each one of us. Moments of bright light alternate with moments of darkness with respect to God's will. When they found Jesus in the Temple, Mary and Joseph *did not understand the saying which he spoke to them.*[17] If, like our Lady, we welcome the gift of faith and place all our trust in God, we will confront each situation in our life *cum gaudio et pace*—with the joy and peace of God's children.

(taken in part from “Mary, Model and Teacher of Faith” in [Opus Dei](#))



*With each rising sun brings new hope and new beginnings.
Mother Mary be with us always. Our Model of Hope.*