



From the Pastor
January 1, 2023
Solemnity of Mary,
the Holy Mother of God
New Year's Day

**THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
MOTHER OF THE EUCHARIST.**

As you may know, we have devoted the bulletin article column to the USA Bishops' National Eucharistic Revival document **The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church.** This 3-year

revival should help us better understand and celebrate our **Lord's Real Presence** in the **Eucharist**. This is part 21 in our series; for past articles on this **Revival**, go to our parish website - stjustin.org.

THE BVM: MOTHER OF GOD, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH, MOTHER OF THE EUCHARIST.

On this eighth and final day of the **Octave of Christmas**, the **Church** honors the **woman** whose faith and devotion enabled our **Lord Jesus Christ's Real Presence** on earth to become a reality: His **Mother**. She was, in fact, the first true **Tabernacle** and **Ark of the Covenant!** For in previous ages, **God's Word** dwelt among us on **tablets of stone**. However, when God's "**Word became flesh**" [John 1:14a], **Jesus**, the **Second Person of the Blessed Trinity**, began to dwell in the womb of His **Mother**. Thus, as we explained in the article on October 2, 2022, when the **Son of God** was conceived and developed in her womb, the **Son of Mary** received his **Mother's DNA** and genes - which means she was present in Him and, by extension, in His **Eucharistic Body and Blood!**

SAINT JOHN PAUL II: HIS CONTEMPLATIVE & MYSTICAL WRITINGS. On **Holy Thursday**, 2003, in the 25th year of his pontificate, **Pope John Paul II** wrote an **Encyclical Letter** to all **Bishops, Priests** and **Deacons, Men** and **Women** in **Consecrated Life**, and all the **Lay Faithful** on the **Eucharist** and its relationship to the **Church**. Some found the section on the **Eucharist** and our **Blessed Mother** his most contemplative, if not mystical compositions. He began by pondering the profound connection between **Mary** carrying **Jesus** in her womb and us, for, in a sense, each time we receive **Holy Communion**, we become, for a few moments, just like our **Blessed Mother!**

Saint John Paul then pieces together a few biblical passages to present an intriguing insight. First, scripture does not list **Mary** among those present at the Last Supper; we **DO** know she was at the foot of the Cross, where Jesus entrusted her to the **Beloved Disciple**. [cf. John 19:25-27] We believe that disciple was **John**, one of the **Twelve**, and thus one of our first **Bishops**. We know that he and his brothers gathered in the **Upper Room**, the site of the **Last Supper**, as they awaited the **Holy Spirit** who came on **Pentecost**, and among them was "**Mary the mother of Jesus.**" [Acts 1:14] We know that the first **Christians** "**devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.**" [Acts 2:42] and that **Saint Paul**, in his first **Letter to the Corinthians**, had to address abuses and bad habits that had already marred what we now call the **Eucharist**. So ...

Isn't it logical to believe that, although it is not recorded in the **Bible**, our **Blessed Mother** would have received **Eucharist** at these gatherings? And that **Jesus** appointed **Saint John** to be far more than His **Mother's** caretaker; he was her own 'personal chaplain' - or rather, **Bishop!** As **Saint John Paul** wrote: "**What must Mary have felt as she heard from the mouth of Peter, John, James and the other Apostles the words spoken at the Last Supper: 'This is my body which is given for you' [Luke 22:19]? ... For Mary, receiving the Eucharist must have somehow meant welcoming once more into her womb that heart which had beat in unison with hers.**". What holy food for thought, indeed! As some say, "**Mary's union with her Divine Son in Holy Communion from the hand of Saint John the Apostle was more intimate, even closer, than when the Son of God was wrapped for nine months in her own immaculate flesh. The fully human consciousness of Jesus is present in the Risen Lord of the Holy Eucharist.**"

A HOLY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION. May I suggest we all make - as a **New Year's** resolution - to do all we can to grow in our knowledge of - and experience in receiving - the great **Gift of Eucharist** during this three-year **Revival!** May **God** bless us with health and holiness in **2023!**

In Christ

Father Mark