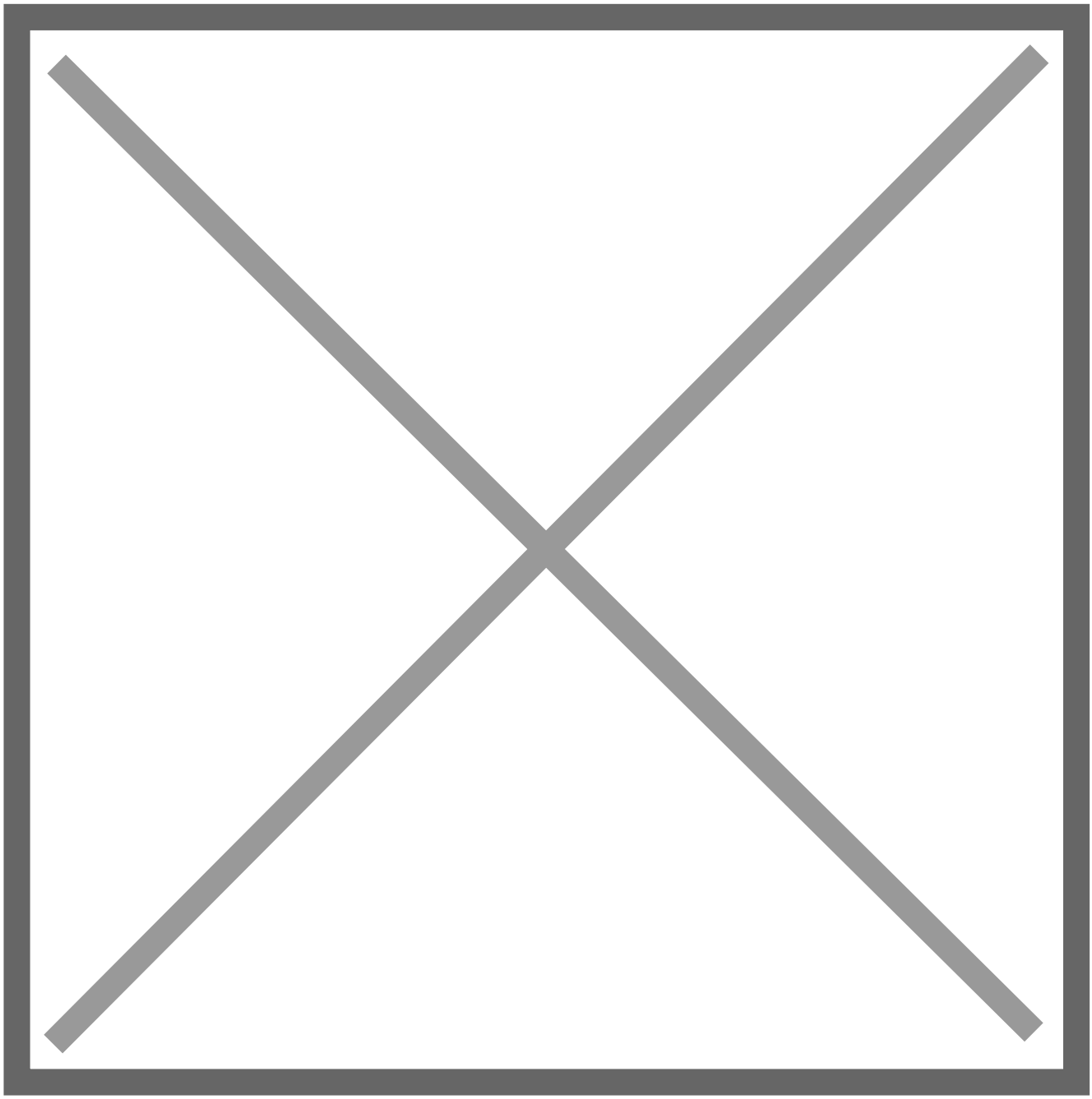
Spirituality
Vatican
Francis, the comic strip



Pope Francis delivers his blessing as he leads his general audience in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Nov. 18, 2020. (CNS/Vatican Media)

Carol Glatz

View Author Profile



Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — November 18, 2020
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

There is no better way to pray than like Mary, who opened her heart to God with humility and trust, Pope Francis said.

"It is putting our life in the Lord's hands, that he be the one who guides us. We can all pray like this, almost without words," the pope said Nov. 18 during his weekly general audience, which was livestreamed from the library of the Apostolic Palace.

Continuing his series of audience talks about prayer, Francis reflected on Mary as a model of prayer.

Mary did not autonomously orchestrate her life, the pope said. "She waits for God to take the reins of her path and guide her where he wants."

By being docile and willing to be God's instrument, she prepares the way for "the great events in which God takes part in the world," he said.

"There is no better way to pray than to place oneself like Mary in an attitude of openness with a heart open to God, 'Lord, what you want, when you want and how you want,'" he said.

Those whose lives are inspired by such a prayerful attitude, he said, "do not get upset when their days are filled with problems," but face reality knowing that if they offer themselves with humble love, "we become instruments of God's grace."

When the angel Gabriel told Mary of God's plan for her, the pope said, Mary "knew how to reject fear, even while sensing that her '**yes**' would bring her tremendously difficult trials. If in prayer we understand that each day given by God is a call, our hearts will then widen, and we will accept everything."

People also should pray that the Lord would be present every step of the way, "that he does not leave us alone, that he does not leave us to temptation, that he does not abandon us during terrible moments," he said.

Mary not only accompanied Jesus's entire life in prayer, right up to his death and resurrection, she also accompanied the first steps of the church, praying with "the men and women whom her son had called to form his community," Francis said.

"Mary is not a priest among them. No. She is the mother of Jesus who prays with them in community, like one of the community; she prays with them and for them," he said.

Not only did she become the mother of God, she also became the mother of the church through the work of the Holy Spirit, he said.

Her "natural feminine intuition is exalted by her most singular union with God in prayer," the pope said. "This is why, reading the Gospel, we note that she seems to disappear at times, only to reappear for crucial moments: it was God's voice that guided her heart and her steps where her presence was needed."

Francis concluded his catechesis recalling how Mary's heart has been compared to "a pearl of incomparable splendor, formed and smoothed by patient acceptance of God's will through the mysteries of Jesus meditated on in prayer."

"How beautiful it would be if we, too, could be a bit like our Mother with a heart open to the Word of God, with a silent, obedient heart" that lets God's word grow.

Advertisement