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“From that hour the disciple took her into his home” (John 19:27).

[1 Cor 15:1-11; Jn 19:25-27](#)

Sorrowful Mother

Devotion to Mary has long been integral to Catholic piety. She is seen as the most intimate witness to the mystery of Christ, having conceived and carried him in her womb, given birth to him and nurtured him in his human development. Mary is the preeminent disciple, the model for all of us in how to give our lives over to the same intimate relationship she had with Jesus, conceiving, carrying and giving birth to him in the world by our Christian lives.

John’s Gospel, though it has no infancy narratives, gives Mary a central role in Jesus’ public life by her influence at the wedding feast at Cana. Her sensitive awareness of the couple’s need leads to Jesus’ first miracle. “Do whatever he tells you” is her first instruction to us. At the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus entrusted Mary to the disciple, who “took her into his home.” This, again, is for us. If we truly want to know Jesus, ask Mary, for she has been closer to him than any other human being, from birth to death, through his suffering to his glory.

The liturgical commemoration of Our Lady of Sorrows follows the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Jesus' crucifixion is the central paradox of the Gospel. Discipleship leads us inevitably to this “sign of contradiction” in our own lives. No one comes to full maturity and spiritual wholeness without suffering and loss. Mary is the perfect guide through the transformation we must experience to share the full mystery of Christ.

The origins of today's feast date back to the 13th century when the rosary first became popular as the catechism of the poor. Praying the five sorrowful mysteries is one way to reflect on the life of Jesus through the eyes and heart of Mary, his mother.

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