

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

### **Mama Mary With A Side Of Grace**

**Fr. Ethan Moore**

My name is Father Ethan Moore, and welcome back to do \*ba da ba ba ba\*, I'm Lentin' It. Let us pray together.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Holy Mother Mary, we implore your intercession as we desire to belong more to you. For we know as we are yours, we then are your Son's, just as you said "Fiat", "Be it done onto me according to Thy word." May the word become flesh in us as we seek union with your heart and the heart of your Son. Let us pray together. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As we kind of wrap up and end our journey, our sessions on Lovin' it, Lentin' it, no better place to end than the love of our Mother. There she is. She's got my back, thank goodness. And she's got your back too. It is through the Mother that we receive the Son, and we are beloved disciples. As we belong to her, just as she was given to us at the foot of the cross, at the end of Christ's life here on earth, one of the last gifts, one of the greatest gifts He gave to all of us was His loving mother to be taken into our care. And in doing just that, we received the gift of the nurturing way that Jesus was brought into this world. The great intercessor and lover of Christ, and the lover of us, her children, her sons, and her daughters.

A number of years ago I was driving home for Mother's Day, and I had completely forgotten to get my mom any kind of gift. And as I was just nearing home, it suddenly dawned on me that I had nothing to offer my mom. So I pulled off on the next exit and furiously looked for any kind of store, and I just found a random grocery store. So I walked in, trying to figure something out, and it just... suddenly inspiration hit me. "I'm going to get my mother a rainbow of balloons." So I went to the balloon counter, and asked for just one balloon of red, one balloon of orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, your standard ROYGBV, and she blew the balloons up for me. And as she was handing me the balloons, I noticed on her name badge that

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

her name was literally “Heaven”. So I received for my mother a rainbow of balloons from Heaven.

So I drove home and I delivered the balloons to my mom. She was kind of confused, maybe slightly happy, or appeared that way just to appease me. And we celebrated her for the loving person she was. And as we were at home just having a good time, I cracked open my Magnificat, which is just such a great resource to keep us connected to the daily mass, and I looked at the reflection for that day, and it was offered by Pope Benedict. And he said in the small reflection there that, “Heaven on earth is received when Christ is welcomed into our life.”

So here was this glorious connection of mother, heaven, rainbow, Jesus. This, like, covenantal bond that happens through... This covenantal bond that happens through a faithful relationship of Jesus and Mary. That we are brought into this world by a mother. By our physical mother. She gives us life, and that life is a gift. As she nurtures 9 months in her womb, so too is the presence of the Mother in our life, that she is that supportive rock that spiritually guides us to her Son as we develop a love for her. It only strengthens our love for her Son, Jesus Christ.

And so it a climactic and pivotal piece to our life of joy that we celebrate all of our journey with the one who was in the journey with Jesus more intimately than anyone else here on earth. That she herself was the home for Him, providing for Him in Nazareth and beyond, dwelling with Him, and being there in the simple, simple daily grind that her, and Joseph, and Jesus experienced in the efforts of everyday life. So too does our Mother Mary desire to be for us in our workaday world. Our ordinary lives. She is there to support us and bring us into a strengthened love to her and to her Son.

Sister Mary Gabriel, a Sister of Life, gave a talk at a women’s conference that was offered called “Given”. For the year of consecrated life here in the United States, a beautiful gathering was offered to women of the entire nation as they were... they actually received scholarships to go on this fantastic faith experience in which just women from all over, both sisters, religious, mothers, doctors, you name it, just an awesome experience of the vibrancy and vitality of women.

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

Sister Mary Gabriel was there and gave a talk on Mother Mary, and she said in a profound yet simple way that, “It is a woman’s body who has space for another body in her”. Like, duh, you know? That women bear life. That they have babies. And yet that’s such a remarkable reality, that it is in their body that they have space for more life than just their own. Certainly this is the case of our Holy Mother Mary, that she has a space not just in her body, like she did for her Son, but in her heart for every single one of us. When her heart was pierced, it was pierced to reveal God’s love for us through her, and so too she invites us to enter into her heart, to be... To enter into her heart, to share with her every component of our needs, as she brings them to her Son on a silver platter, as St. Louis De Montfort distinguishes.

So Sister Mary Gabriel said that “Mary’s vocation, just as it included being the mother of Jesus Christ, and how seriously she took that responsibility upon her shoulders, so too does she take that same devotion to each of us, her children. And she is truly our Mother, truly our guide. Just as she was there for Christ, she is there for us in everything we could possibly imagine.” And this is Jesus’ desire for us, that we take His mother, our Mother into our lives, and to celebrate her love. And it is a great gift to have Marian Consecration, and to renew that on an annual basis.

And Lent, in this Lent, we will be celebrating the Feast of the Annunciation, where the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary and said, “Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.” And it was through Mary’s formal, “Yes. Be it done unto me according to Thy word” that Jesus took flesh, and He was conceived in her womb. And it is that same, “Fiat”, that saying “Yes” that we share in as we devote ourselves to God’s will. We can only offer that “Yes” from our hearts when we give freely, just as our Mother did in love and in truth.

And so she is our Mom. You know, I actually call my mother, “my mother”. That’s what she’s labeled in my phone, that’s how I speak to her when I see her. It’s like “Hello my mother.” Because she’s not just “mom”, she’s my mom, and that’s so true of all of our mothers. And yet that’s true of our Mother Mary. She is my Mom. Mine. Individual, particular. And she uses that same language back to each of us, that I am her son. Singular. That she knows me personally, intimately, and desires my greatest good.

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

Just as my mom would tell me to put on a rain jacket when it's raining, or give me my lunch for school, or wake me up in the morning, her desire to... her love for me was spoken, was acted out, and was given freely. So too Mother Mary, in our spiritual journey, gives freely to us, for she desires all of what Jesus desires for us. So when we consecrate ourselves to her, when we clearly identify with her as Mother, it opens a floodgate of grace, and a floodgate of joy, for she was a pillar of ivory, a pillar of truth, and a heart of love and joy. And so when we invite her fully deeply into our hearts, it is her love that changes us.

I recently heard a story from a priest in Sacramento, California. He had an opportunity... He was called out actually and given this opportunity to anoint a woman in the hospital. An 82-year-old woman who had been bedridden for 15 years, and she was kind of slowly getting to the last stages of life here on earth. And as he entered her room, he just felt this presence of someone holy, and he found out that this woman, that she was the mother of 11. She had 11 biological children. And then following those children, she adopted 11 more children. So she was the mother of 22 children during her lifetime. She was the mother of 22 children during her lifetime.

So, as he goes to her bedside to anoint her, to pray with her, and to be with her in these last hours, she spoke to him. She said "Father, would you tell me something about Mary?" And the priest was so taken aback, he said "Mary? You mean the Mother of God?" And she said "Yes Father. Could you please do me the favor of speaking to me about her?" And, very humbled and honored, the priest just went into some of his own personal stories about Mary, and how she had given herself to him, and how his devotion to her, what that looked like.

And after he said a few things, he asked her in return, he said "Would you mind sharing with me something of your love of Mary?" And she said "Oh, most certainly." She told him this story about how when she was 6 years old, she was orphaned. That her father had passed away very early in life, and her mother actually died when she turned 6 years old. And so she was brought to this Catholic orphanage, and it was there, the very first Sunday that she was at this orphanage, she went to mass, and the priest at mass spoke so beautifully of Mary she couldn't help but want to belong to this Mother of love.

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

And so after mass was completed, she went over to the statue of Mary in the church, and she looked intently at Mary, and speaking just from her heart she said to Mary, she said “Your Son never had a sister, and I don’t have a mother. If I’d be a sister to your Son, would you be a mother to me?” And in the affirmation of her heart, Mary, her Mother, Mary, her Mother, warmly embraced her in that moment and encounter of prayer. And this woman, 82-year-old woman, said to the priest “And never has my Mother failed me.”

Truthful, this is our Mother who intercedes for us. She is our big Momma. She takes all the stress, all the anxiety, all the crosses of our life, and she is there to offer us some comfort and motherly tenderness and love. And so as we draw into some of the last days of Lent, that holy week of Jesus’ way of the cross, we can see that there is a way of Mary. That she too, who suffered along with her Son, brought Him strength.

If you happened to have seen the movie *The Passion of Christ*, there’s this powerful scene. As Jesus is walking down the Via Dolorosa, He encounters His mother. And as they exchange a glance of love, you see Christ almost like rejuvenated by her love for Him, and He finds the strength to continue on His way. Mary, who was there for Christ, is there for us. And as she was there at His cross, at His crucifixion, she desires to be there for us in all of our moments of pain and sorrow, and to bring us in that time to a place of seeing them once again as an opportunity of love. For she did not doubt her life on earth, she did not doubt the life of her Son here on earth as given freely, as He did on the cross.

For it is tradition by some eastern Fathers to believe that as Jesus was laid in the tomb, and Peter and John went running, racing after the tomb once they heard from Mary Magdalene that the stone had been rolled away, that they did not find Him there because He was with His mother. That His first true visit was to His holy mother, consoling her and bringing her His love.

So too does He bring us His love as He brings us to His mother, that we can have the Mother and the Son together in this life of faith, and this life of love. May we who desire to make this Lent a journey of joy, a place of living love, may we enter into it not by ourselves, but with that woman who brought Christ into this world, and lived in union with Him of heart and union of Him with prayer through... And

## Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

she who lived with Him in union of heart and union with us through prayer. May we give our all to her as we do all for Jesus and Mary. Let us pray.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Holy Mother Mary, you teach us how to love. You teach us how to follow your Son in all the hills and valleys of life. Help us to be a disciple like you, to say, “Yes” to your Son’s will in our life. And we desire above all else to give our everything in love to you and your Son. We pray this as we pray together. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. This has been \*ba da ba ba ba\*, I’m Lovin’ it. I hope you have a loving, living, lively Lent. God bless you.