



Mary, Mother & Queen of all Creation



In July, 2014, ISIS seized a fourth century monastery, *Mar Behnam, in Iraq. This sacred place was built upon the tombs of Mar Behnam and his sister, Sarah. Both were converts to Christianity and martyred for the faith in 352AD. Under the threat of execution, the Catholic monks were forced to immediately evacuate and left behind an ancient treasury of sacred relics, icons, and manuscripts. The following year, the monastery was destroyed as ISIS sent a message to the world of their quest to wipe Christianity off the face of the earth.

Recently, Iraqi troops retook the area around the monastery. Among the ruins, a damaged but recognizable statue of the Blessed Mother was found by the soldiers. Despite the danger that surrounded them, these brave men took time to restore the image of Mary. They placed her in a make shift shrine and offered traditional Marian prayers. They, as so many Christians before them and from the earliest times, turned confidently to Mary to ask for her protection and intercession.

To understand centuries of devotion to Mary, we must first understand her devotion to us. When the peasant girl of Nazareth uttered her fiat, her yes, to become the Mother of the God of all creation, her motherhood was extended to all humankind. Jesus confirmed her universal and divine motherhood when as he hung ,dying on the cross, he said, "Behold your Mother."

As every good mother, Mary waits for us. She wants to hear about our every care, worry, joys, triumphs, and hopes. She never wearies or tires of us. She is full of grace and wants

only to be saved by her divine Son. As Pope Francis teaches us: "Mary, the Mother who cared for Jesus, now cares with maternal affection and pain for this wounded world...Completely transfigured, she now lives with Jesus, and all creatures sing of her fairness. She is the Woman, "clothed in the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (Rev 12:1). Carried up into heaven, she is the Mother and Queen of all creation." (Laudato Si, #24)

This month marks the 100th anniversary of an important Marian event. On May 13, 1917, Mary first appeared to three children in Portugal. She would appear to them, once a month, until October of that year. Her message was a simple one— pray for the conversion of sinners through prayer, penance, sacrifice and reception of the sacraments and consecration to her Immaculate Heart. Mary especially stressed praying the rosary to the children. Our Lady of Fatima is one of the most significant Marian apparitions. It is estimated that 4-5 million people visit Fatima each year to pray to Mary for special intercession. Pope Francis will travel to Portugal in honor of this special anniversary.

Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!

**Mar* is a Syriac word/title for Saint.

May 7 Fourth Sunday of Easter	Acts 2: 14, 36-41	<i>How do the graces received in the Sacrament of Baptism help to avoid "corruption" of the soul?</i>
May 14 Fifth Sunday of Easter	1 Peter 2: 4-9	<i>God's love for us is constant and never fails us. Do you remember his love when others do not accept you?</i>
May 21 Sixth Sunday of Easter	Jn 14: 15-21	<i>How does faith in God comfort you in your most trying times?</i>
May 28 Seventh Sunday of Easter	Jn 17: 1-11	<i>How does your life witness Jesus to the world?</i>



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Picture on right side: Our Lady of Fatima with the three children, Lucia dos Santos, Francisco and Jacinta Marto.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE 100 YEAR CELEBRATION OF FATIMA, GO TO:

- ◆ **Our Sunday Visitor:** <https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Article/TabId/535/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/21367/The-meaning-of-Fatima-100-years-later.aspx>
- ◆ **Archdiocese of Philadelphia:** <http://archphila.org/fatima/>
- ◆ **EWTN:** <https://www.ewtn.com/fatima/>,
- ◆ **World Apostolate of Fatima USA:** <https://wafusa.org/>
- ◆ **Movie:** The Miracle of Fatima (1952) produced by Warner Brothers. Clips can be found on you tube.
- ◆ **For Older Students:** video- Venerable Fulton Sheen: Our Lady of Fatima posted at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWzPU1oeViM>
- ◆ **For younger children:** Our Lady of Fatima resources at: <http://childrenoftheeucharist.org/>

The Requests of Our Lady of Fatima

- ◆ Pray the Rosary daily.
- ◆ Offer Sacrifices for Sinners.
- ◆ Consecration and Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
- ◆ First Five Saturdays Devotion
- ◆ Wear the Brown Scapular.

OTHER MARIAN RESOURCES:

- ◆ **Video:** Watch the Iraqi soldiers restore the statue of Virgin Mary statue and offer prayers. <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/blog/watch-soldiers-restore-virgin-mary-statue-smashed-by-isis>
- ◆ **Video:** Marian Images from around the world posted at <http://phillyocf.org/resources/> which is set to the music of the French Marian hymn, COURONNEE D'ETOILES
- ◆ **International Marian Research Institute** of the University of Dayton: <https://www.udayton.edu/imri/>