

PROLOGUE

The Calling of Mother of God Community

Mother of God is a Catholic and ecumenical covenant community with an evangelistic mission, called together by God as a fruit of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the twentieth century. We believe that God has united us as a community within the Body of Christ in order to live out the New Covenant in a specific way by the grace of the Holy Spirit as we await Christ's coming in glory. As members of Mother of God Community, we desire to accept his call and commit our lives to his purposes, relying on his love and grace to complete in us the work he has begun.

Our life together takes place within the context of God's glorious and eternal plan, by which he has exalted his Son as Lord over all creation and given us, his sons and daughters, a share in his divine life (cf. Col 1:15-20, 2 Pet 1:3-4). Our covenant is a commitment to God and, through him, to one another to live life in the Spirit as a community within the Body of Christ.

Our Founding Charism

Mother of God Community is rooted in God's work in the Church through the Charismatic Renewal and the Second Vatican Council. The Renewal is characterized by the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit, that is, a personal encounter with the living Christ and an experience of the power of the Holy Spirit and his gifts, which brings alive our participation in the Church through the Word of God and the Eucharist. From this grace flows an interior awareness of the lordship of Jesus and a longing for his return. We have experienced a thirst to read the Scriptures and an awareness that God speaks to his children personally through Scripture, the Sacraments and prayer. We have seen an outpouring of the charismatic gifts: tongues, prophecy, healing and the prayer of praise. We have been given an increased docility to the action of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, a desire for unity among Christians and the grace to live in community with one another.

Mother of God Community treasures this grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit and seeks to appropriate it more deeply. Bible study and weekly prayer meetings have held a place of importance in the Community since its beginnings. We ponder the Scriptures daily and seek the Lord in prayer with expectancy, knowing that God desires to reveal himself to us. Certain aspects of the gospel have especially impacted the life of the Community: the primacy of Christ, the inworking of the cross, the efficacy of the precious blood of Jesus and the power of his name, the practice of the presence of God, taking authority over our thoughts, the perspective of God's eternal plan, the importance of inner healing and deliverance, and more recently, an understanding of the theology of the body.

The name Mother of God signifies that the Community, receiving and treasuring the Word of God like Mary, is called to imitate her faith and obedience to God. As we yield ourselves to God, Christ is formed in us and we become vessels through which Christ is brought forth into the world.

Our Call to Holiness

“And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head” (Mark 14:3).

The example of the woman at Bethany, who poured out on Jesus what was most precious to her, moves us to pour out our lives to God in response to the love he has manifested to us through his Son. Far from being a waste, a life laid at the feet of Jesus bears witness that he is worthy and suffuses the Church with the fragrance of his presence.

The grace of baptism in the Spirit is essentially a mystical grace; that is, a grace of experiential participation in the divine life given to us in Christ (1 Cor 2:9-12), which is meant to lead us to holiness. We experience an inner working of the Holy Spirit, who convicts us of sin, renews our minds through the scriptures, and enables us to reject the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. Through prayer we begin to realize the great call that every human person has to be intimately joined to the Trinity, not only in heaven but here and now. This realization moves us to lay down our lives in surrender to the Father’s plan for us, and to spread his Kingdom through works of mercy, hospitality and evangelization (cf. *Christifideles laici*, 15).

Our Call to Community

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another, as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:12-17).

Although this Community, like the whole Body of Christ, is made up of weak and imperfect people, God has worked in each person’s life, and in his great love he is transforming us into a pure and holy bride for his Son. Members of the Community, recognizing that our lives are not our own, commit ourselves to a covenant relationship with God and, through him, with each other, to encourage one another in yielding to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit (Col 3:12-17; 2 Cor 3:18). Every member exercises some charism which builds up the body for the service of the Church (Rom 12:6, Eph 4:12).

The call to Mother of God Community is a call to live our Christian life together, in communion with one another as a reflection of the Trinity. Families, clergy, widows, widowers, singles, and consecrated lay people are united by this commitment to live in covenant relationship with one another. We experience that each of our steps toward holiness and deeper conversion builds up the body. Counter to the world’s individualistic culture, we need each other for encouragement, fellowship and support. Some of this takes place in structured community activities such as the prayer meeting, Lord’s Day celebrations, retreats, and small group meetings. But much of our common life is lived in our daily interactions, in our affection for one another, our enjoyment in being together, and in schedule choices that center our lives around each other.

Our Call to Christian Unity

“That they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you... that the world may believe that you sent me” (Jn 17:21).

Reverencing this prayer spoken by Jesus on the eve of his passion, members of the Community strive to love one another as brothers and sisters, as did the early Christians. Mindful that what separates us as believers in Christ is much less than what unites us, Mother of God seeks to be a sign of unity within the Body of Christ. Unity in Mother of God Community includes a strong commitment to maintaining relationships and resolving any conflict that keeps us apart. While cherishing the various traditions to which we belong—Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox—we work toward the fulfillment of Jesus’ prayer, when his Body will be completely one.

Our Call to Evangelize

“Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch” (Lk 5:4).

Members of the Community desire to bear witness, in word and in deed, to the majesty of God and the love he has lavished on us in Christ. Our experience of God’s forgiveness, mercy and love through our community relationships impels us to share that gift with others. We seek to spread the good news of Jesus both through personal witness and through Community ministries such as education, missions, retreats, publications, and service to the poor.

Our Call to Ecclesial Maturity

“Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.” (Eph 4:15-16).

Our specific call from the Lord comes in the context of the universal Church. We embrace Pope John Paul II’s call to lay movements to grow toward ecclesial maturity. This entails: giving paramount importance to the call to holiness, fidelity to the Magisterium in doctrine and morals, steadfast communion with the Pope and the bishops, participation in the apostolic aims of the Church, and a commitment to transforming society in light of the values of the gospel.