

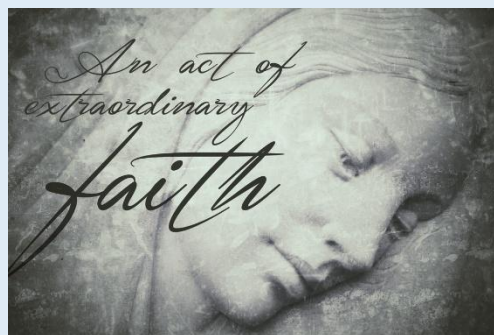


From the Desk of Father Peter

May, the Month of the Virgin Mary

Many Christians, even Catholics, think that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is a late, perhaps medieval development. But for the earliest days of the Church, Christians have revered Mary and sought her intercession.

The Catholic practice of assigning a special devotion to each month goes back to the early 16th century. Since the best known of these devotions is probably the dedication of May as the month of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it might come as a surprise that it



wasn't until the late 18th century that this devotion arose among Jesuits in Rome. In the early years of the 19th century, it quickly spread throughout the Western Church, and, by the time of Pope Pius IX's declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, it had become universal.

May crownings and other special events in May in honor of Mary, such as public recitation of the rosary, stem from this time. Sadly, such communal events are more rare today, but we can take the month of May as an opportunity to renew our own devotion to the Mother of God by taking up our rosaries, learning a few Marian prayers, and teaching our family members how to pray the Rosary.

Parents, in particular, should encourage Marian devotion in their children, since the non-Catholic Christians they encounter today often downplay (if not denigrate) the role that the Blessed Virgin played in our salvation through her fiat—her joyous “Yes” to the

will of God.

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With Peace and love to all,

Fr. Peter Enyan-Boadu