

MAY 25, 2026 FATHER MICHAEL COUTTS

Pentecost is traditionally celebrated as the birthday of the church. The Monday after Pentecost is a recently instituted Feast of Mary, the mother of the church. It has recent as the year 2019, and it was instituted by Pope Francis. In a world in which there is so much division, chaos and confusion, which also extends to our churches, to our families, to our schools.

Our hearts are troubled and we need motherly care to help us during this difficult time. And it's so apt that we have Mary designed as the mother of our church. Pentecost is a feast that we celebrate as the birthday of the church. When the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles, and then over 500 others, as we were told, which is practically all the church in those days, and when the Holy Spirit came down on them, they were renewed.

They were transformed. They went out and proclaimed the death, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They told all people who were willing to listen. That sin was forgiven. That salvation was for all, that at the judgment God would not lose them or abandon them. God wanted salvation for all people, but he designed in his great plan of salvation that Mary would be the center of that plan of salvation.

Mary said yes to the invitation of God at the time of the Annunciation, and she never reneged on that promise for the rest of her life. As we heard in the gospel at the cross, her station keeping stood the mournful mother, weeping close to Jesus to the end. And it was this end that Jesus said to her, woman, behold your son.

And he entrusted John, who stood for the church 2000 years ago. And all through the centuries, even to our own time, it was so necessary that she would be there because she would have a balance. She knew exactly what we had we were going through. She herself. Excuse me? She

herself, during her own lifetime, had a whole lot of issues which she had no idea. No solution, no answers. And we are told that she pondered these things in her heart.

When Mary found that she was told that they had to move during the height of a pregnancy all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem, she could have very well said to the Lord, you organized the whole universe and you couldn't organize a census at this time. You could put the stars in the moon in their places. But there is no place for me to have this child who is the Son of God.

You want this child who be the life of all nations. And yet one of the people is trying to kill him. All these questions and problems and issues, we are told that Mary pondered it in her heart. And a mother has got that wonderful character of holding the church together, just like our mothers hold our families together among the more than a father, a brother, a sister, uncle or aunt hold the family together.

When my mother was alive, I would meet all my brothers, my nephews and my nieces. I knew when a baby was born, a teenager falling in love, brother who had gone to a hospital, or a sister in law who had an issue with a child, a nephew or niece going off to Europe, nodded to study.

And then when my mother died, we hardly meet together. It's not that we don't know what is going on, but very often I know a baby is born when I'm invited for the baptism or when the couple has gone off on the honeymoon, or when the nephew or niece has returned after a year from Europe. Now these things are important in our lives and we know them, but it is a mother that holds things together.

So why do we need the Feast of Mary when we have so many feasts of Our Lady, the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity, Mary, the Queen of the universe, Mary the Queen of apostles, we have the holy name of Mary. Why do we need it so badly today? Well, basically, because if we

look at our world today in all the continents, perhaps, except Australia, they at least 2 or 3 countries that are at war with one another.

They have leaders who are egomaniacs so self-centered and who have delusions of grandeur, they proclaim to the whole world, we have made our country much better than it was before. We can organize that there is order and peace in our country when they have been starting was not only in their own countries, but according to countries across the world.

And they are totally unconcerned. Of the thousands that have died of many more, thousands that are injured and left homeless. In this time, we need somebody to give us that balance, that calmness, that security, and who else? That Mary, our mother.

At times like this, in times of pain and grief and bitterness, we tend to pray the prayer of the Psalm 73 and it says, I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggle. Their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human bondage. They are not plagued by human will ills.

They clothe themselves with violence, and from their callous hearts comes iniquity, and their evil imaginations knows no limits. Their callous hearts focus on iniquity. And they are evil imaginations. No. No limit. It is at times like this we need somebody that will hold us together.

And as Saint Ignatius of Loyola would say, that if we want to make our prayer to the father, then we should go to through Jesus. And who else can take us to Jesus? Then Mary, the mother of the church, and Pope John Paul II would repeat the same, same message to all of us. If we want our prayers to be answered, let us go through Mary.

We want justice in the world today. Who else can bring it? Then the Queen of peace, the mother of the church. She invites us to come to the table and the banquet of the Lord. And like at Cana, human can be sure

that there will be no lack of wine, the wine of joy and contentment. God bless you all.