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MYSTERIES IN THE LIFE OF MARY

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There are many mysteries in the life of Our Lord and Mary also has a part in many of them. But in addition to that we might consider many other mysteries in the life of Mary. Here are some suggestions for personal reflection.

1. Mary's early life, growing up in her home with her parents: the most perfect of daughters; a delight to her parents; the cause of their joy.
2. Mary's interaction with the persons around her: her broader family, relatives, neighbors, friends. Mary was a model for all. Everyone could note her loving devotion to her parents and her care for the family home. She was an obedient

daughter. She was always cheerful and optimistic. There was no questioning her purity, her modesty in dress and conversation.

3. Mary was full of life. She thoroughly enjoyed the world God has made for us. The refinement of her senses enabled her to appreciate the beauty of creation. Her mind and heart were attuned to God's ways and consequently she could see good everywhere.

4. Mary's charity was outstanding. As the most perfect woman she was richly endowed with the gift of speech. She always had something to say: commenting on what she observed; responding to the

impressions of others, interacting with others in a most engaging and delightful way. She never offended God by any of her words (thoughts, desires or actions). In all things she sought to please God and, cooperating with his grace, she actually did please him more than any other creature: angel or human being.

5. Mary was always ready to serve. We see how she travelled to the home of Elizabeth and stayed there for months, helping her older cousin. We see her at Cana, attentive to the needs of the guests at the wedding feast and taking steps to resolve those needs. Her delight was to serve her husband, St. Joseph, and her Son, Jesus.

6. Mary related well to everyone, men included. Her pure love for God and a deep awareness of his presence with her always and everywhere led her to deal naturally, discreetly, with the young boys and men around her. Her meeting with St. Joseph and their marriage brought her special joy.

7. Mary's heart and her life were filled with joy: the joy of knowing and experiencing the closeness of God. She wanted to share this with everyone around her. Others in fact, found their spirits lifted up in her presence. All could find in her peace and joy, a brighter outlook on life and its problems.

8. Mary loved to work. She saw her daily chores as a service to her family, neighbors and friends. But above all, Mary knew that God himself sees and knows all that we do.

9. Mary was the best pray-er. For her, as for us, to pray is to converse with God. We talk to him and he talks to us. We listen to him and he listens to us. Mary's prayer was never rote, never boring. Her prayer was characterized by that intimacy that comes when two people in love share their sentiments. Mary at times prayed out loud with others. But in the depths of her heart there was that constant dialogue of love with God. rjs