

Last night, our celebration of the Mass of the Lord's Supper brought to our eyes the great love that Christ showed to His Apostles in the Upper Room. His gifts of humbly washing their feet, of bestowing on them a share in His priesthood, and of inaugurating the new covenant in the Eucharist strengthened them for what would be their mission to proclaim the Gospel. But Jesus was not finished bestowing gifts on His people. Even as He hung upon the Cross, even as He poured out His last bit of strength, the Lord offered one final loving gift: “‘Woman, behold, your son.’ Then he said to the beloved disciple, ‘Behold, your mother.’”

Jesus had been stripped of everything. His own people had handed him over to be crucified. Most of His disciples had abandoned Him. Even his clothes had been taken away and claimed by others. His Blessed Mother was the last thing left in this world for our crucified Lord. She was His last consolation. Yet, in His great love for us, He gives us even His own Mother.

This Holy Woman stood at the Cross of her Son, her very heart pierced by a sword of sorrow. And yet she did not despair, she did not turn away. She remained there with her Son in His agony, in His suffering, in His death.

It is striking that in this church, where nearly every beauty has been stripped away or hidden from our sight, the images of Mary remain. In the painting of the Annunciation, just above me, Mary gives her response to the angel Gabriel: “Be it done to me according to thy

word.” In that moment, she said “Yes” to God’s plan. She said “Yes” to the joys of being the mother of Jesus, and she said “Yes” to the terrible sorrow of this day. But she never took back that “Yes.” She never turned away from the Lord’s plan, not even for a moment. Instead the one who is Full of Grace allowed herself to be filled and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. She became for us the perfect image of faithfulness to God. And she become our Mother.

Turn to the Blessed Mother on this day. Spend some time walking with Mary the sorrowful mysteries of her Rosary. Allow yourself to stand there with Mary as Jesus is arrested and scourged and crowned with thorns. Allow yourself to walk with Mary as she traveled the way of the Cross with Jesus. Allow yourself to suffer with Mary as she watched her Son die upon the cross. Receive this great gift from Jesus who has given Mary to be your Mother. Let Mary guide you on the road to discipleship. May our Blessed Mother to take us all into her loving arms as she points us closer to Jesus.