ALL-THINGS-MARIAN-03-21-24

**Intro music:** [00:00:00] All Things Marian, a weekly program of information, research, and experience about the Virgin Mary, sponsored by the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton. Now your host, Michele Foley.

**Michele Foley:** Thank you, Claire. Thank you for the beautiful introduction to this brand new program. We are sponsored by the International Marian Research [00:01:00] Institute of the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. All Things Marian comes to you through the Catholic voice of Radio Maria every week on Thursday from 1 o'clock Central, 2 o'clock Eastern Time.

Today's presenter is a wonderful person who I know you will enjoy hearing and will really reap the benefits of her journey with Mary. Her name is Lynne Marie Bush. Lynn Marie is has been trained as a pharmacist, and she sought Mary through studies and her personal lifestyle. Welcome, Lynn Marie, and we are so very happy to have you with us today.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Thank you, Michele. Glad to be here.

**Michele Foley:** Good. And today,

**Lynn Marie Bush:** especially today, [00:02:00] oh, I'm sorry, especially that's with the series on Mary in my life. I just wanted to compliment you on that series. I've listened to the prior talks, and I'm glad I can be a part of it.

**Michele Foley:** Oh, you certainly are, and I'm so happy to have you with us again.

So tell us what, uh, you're, you're, you're going to talk about and please share with us today.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Sure, um, listening to the prior talks on Mary and my life, I was very inspired by people's relationship to Mary, and so I was going to focus mostly on what it's like being a, um, consecrated layperson in the world, um, working, um, our normal jobs and encountering people as, as we all do, um, but definitely want to speak a little background about, um, how Mary came into my life and then how she plays a part [00:03:00] in my daily life.

Um, so pretty simple, but from the heart and, um, and hopefully pointing to Our Lady and all the blessings she brings us. So, um, that's, that's the plan, but, um, but feel free if, uh, if there's any, uh, if you want to interject anything, um, in a conversational style, because to me, Mary is very relational and connects us all as her children.

So, um, so that's the little plan for the hour here. Um, first, I just wanted to give a little background, uh, not focus so much on, on, um, on my growing up with Mary as, uh, as how it's like living with Mary in the world today, but a little background. Um, my great grandmother was from Poland and had a great devotion to Mary.

It kind of takes me, takes, hits my heart when I think of, [00:04:00] very simple, very trusting, very loving, very motherly. And so I grew up with that in the home from the start. I remember each of our rooms had a little statue of Our Lady, Our Lady of Grace, and how I would look at that statue and just look at Mary's beauty.

A simple motherly, my heavenly mother, relationship. And then how that grew as I studied theology. It was pharmacy that brought me to theology. In working in the healthcare field, I was encountering many, many, um, moral issues. As a pharmacist, you're between the doctor and the patient. So the doctor writes the order.

And the pharmacist is in the middle dispensing it to the patient. As my pharmacy career took off, there was a lot of conscience protections. So if there was something ordered that was against my conscience, [00:05:00] it was easy to step out and not take part in it. As time went on, those conscience protections started to fall apart.

And I found myself finding jobs in Catholic hospitals so that the ethical code would be protected. As Catholic hospitals began to close or go into alliances with public hospitals, that seemed to erode a little bit too. And as a pharmacist, it was very difficult to be in that middle position and telling the doctor, I'm not going to dispense something that was contrary to my, my beliefs.

And so it was very difficult to be in a secular job, uh, without anybody else supporting those beliefs. And even as time went by, I got, I got to the point where, [00:06:00] um, I realized that, you know, this could be difficult not only losing jobs, but also could there be lawsuits that I refuse things to people that they thought was therapy and I thought was, um, essentially harmful to their health, even death.

Um. So, I turned to Mary and Joseph for help and found myself studying theology so I could understand what the church taught and why the church teaches what she teaches. And so I went to the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family in Washington, D. C. Oh, that was back in the back in the nineties, just to understand bioethics better, uh, to understand why the church, uh, teaches what she teaches about human life and the issues in health care that I was running into.

And so, [00:07:00] um, I found myself at the John Paul II Institute very strongly guided by Our Lady. Um, I remember once I packed a backpack. I get emotional here because of how strong Our Lady, um, was, very gentle, but very strong in leading me to, um, find my answers that I was seeking. So, in Pennsylvania, in, uh, one of the towns near me, there's a church that was open 24 hours up on a hillside, where you could look over and see maybe four different, four different counties.

It was just way up on the hill. And it was an old German church that had a lot of woodwork. Beautiful woodwork. And, um, it creaked a lot at night. It was a little spooky. When my friends and I would meet there to pray after our days were done, and all the families had their children to bed, um, [00:08:00] the mothers would go up to the church and pray.

And it was probably, um, oh, we'd get together about 10 o'clock and stay there till midnight and just pray for the children and pray for our town. And, and there were some bad influences coming into our town, and so we would pray on that. And, um, so one day I thought, I'm gonna go up to that church, take enough meal shakes, and, um, then I'm not leaving until I get an answer what to do about some of these pharmacies

some of these knots that were in my life because of these pharmacy issues. And so I went up to the church and I was going to stay there until I got an answer. And I remember very strongly just feeling that I should go into the sacristy and look for a book called Covenant of Love. I walked in the sacristy [00:09:00] and there was a book called Covenant of Love.

And it was John Paul II on marriage and family. So I grabbed the book, realized what had happened, got scared, and ran. So, I went home, and I thought, what does this book have to do with pharmacy? So, all of us, it was the feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and I was drawn to go to Washington. So I had a friend drive me to Washington, and, and I walked into the John Paul II Institute, and I just knew that was the next step in my path.

And we did. We had courses on bioethics, um, by various instructors who were, who were just quality. And I saw the reasons behind why we respect the human person, how precious human life is, [00:10:00] and how some of these medical things that I was running into was contrary to that. So, it was a rough road. It was a very rough road.

Now that I've realized, I've got to stand my ground on these things, as the Catholic health systems I was working at were essentially struggling and, and opening up more and more, less and less religious influence, and that's what I want to speak on a little bit right now. How the influence of the religious sisters in the Catholic health system was a very Marian

peaceful presence. And I loved working there. It was almost like you were in Mary's womb where people recognize this preciousness of the human person and people were focused on providing health care that was best for the person. Um, [00:11:00] not, um, not letting in things that were contrary to life or contrary to the good of the person or respect for the person.

And when I worked in the hospitals where we had a sister at the head of each department, that was so beautiful. Um, I worked in a hospital where, the, um, sisters actually became like a pharmacist and ran the pharmacy, or respiratory therapist, and ran the respiratory therapy department. And they, they ran that department very, um, organized, very focused on Jesus, and very focused on the beauty of God's precious children.

Um, somewhere along the way with all the healthcare shake ups and troubles and pressures, um, and lack of vocations, and fewer and fewer sisters, toward the end of my pharmacy career when I thought I just couldn't [00:12:00] exist in hospital anymore, um, um, maybe there was one sister on the board. So, the loss of our sisters in Catholic healthcare, um, was a, a, a loss, um, for that institution and society.

And that was a very Marian, uh, presence. The motherliness of the sisters, um, the trust in the, in the work of the hospital. Um, it, it was something that I look back on and I think, wow, how blessed we were. And, and now there's many hospitals that have strong lay people. Um, a strong faith in the lay people running the hospital, and those are beautiful now, too.

But there's been a big loss, um, in the Catholic presence in health care. I firmly believe that. So, so, in working in those hospitals [00:13:00] before I, before I left for other positions, um, that was important to me, to bring that whole spirituality of, uh, motherly presence, and, and the, the truth, the truth of the human person, the truth of, uh, the different scientific things that go on there, building up the human person, not degrading the human person.

Um, that was an important thing for me. It was a, it was an exhausting fight. Um, to hold this back. But, but, um, but Mary's presence in that was, was precious and, and is precious now. I did return to pharmacy. I'm kind of giving you the end of the story here. I did return to pharmacy, um, not where I would expect.

I'm, I'm, uh, in veterinary pharmacy and so that doesn't have that direct service of the person with their health, but it has a service of the pet owners [00:14:00] and, um, is actually somewhere where there's not all those ethical issues that I just would wake up in the morning and say, Oh, what am I going to run into today?

And will I have a job tonight? Um, so I did return to pharmacy, and what I'm finding is my co workers seem to be, um, where I'm finding the presence of Mary in my life, working among my co workers who have all sorts of backgrounds and all sorts of beliefs, and, um, and where I work we're really a team, and how they and, Um, how they just are open and, and it's a more silent witness to Mary, perhaps, in the sense of just being a motherly presence in the midst of a tough world with a lot of young people.

I work night shifts, so there's a lot of young people there. Probably one of the older ones there. Um, and so that motherly presence, and you can see they're attracted to it. There's just something in the human person that's attracted [00:15:00] to a motherly presence. Um, and so that's, that's kind of my pharmacy journey, and Mary in my pharmacy journey.

Um, where I went to work in the meantime, having studied theology, and liking it so much that I continued on. So I got my Master's in Theology, and then I got my Licentiate in Sacred Theology, and then I took, um, two different doctoral, uh, program coursework. And just waiting on the dissertation. So, so as I started studying just to get answers as a pharmacist, how do I live in this world as a good Catholic pharmacist?

Um, um, I just, I started enjoying the theology and so I went into some of those, uh, positions. I was the coordinator for a pastoral formation institute [00:16:00] in my home diocese in Pennsylvania, Scranton, Pennsylvania. And, um, what we, what we did was we would have programs for any lay people, um, who served the church in any way.

So, catechists, Catholic school teachers, um, actually we even worked with the seminary a little on the diaconate program. Um, so, we would provide a formation program for these people and in hopes that they would learn the faith, outright teach it, if they were a Catholic school teacher or catechist, and also have a transforming experience for themselves, and then share that with those they served.

Um, who founded this Pastoral Formation Institute was Cardinal O'Connor, John O'Connor, and he made quite the program. It was, [00:17:00] and Catholic school teachers now will probably just shudder when they hear the amount we, I say, offered them, they say, the amount they had to attend. Um, but, but we had five courses, and they were 12 week long courses, like a college course, 30 hours, with a midterm, a final, and a paper.

And, um, as, as again, as society started to close in, and teachers were required to do more and more continuing education on the secular level, um, it got hard for people to, to commit to all these things, and that program kind of chipped away, um, just, just became minimal. Um, and then they rebuilt the whole thing, trying to, trying to, build the program up again, um, but still choking by the secular requirements and, [00:18:00] and things that people needed to do.

So it, it's a tough job. And in the beginning, people had the free time, um, and as, as society went on and structures built up, I, I think of John Paul II saying that there's, you know, in society there's, um, um, structures of, of sin, and I think the sin, not the sin, yeah, the sin in this is just taking away people's time that they need to spend on prayer, on their faith, um, things like this.

That became the thing to battle was having enough time to keep these things alive. Um, and so you see there too where Mary is the model for that because we read in scripture where Mary pondered things in her heart and I could tell you almost everybody I talk to these days is like, I wish I had time to ponder.

I wish I [00:19:00] had the silence to ponder, um, that it's actually a battle to make that time in silence so that we can stay in touch with that spiritual part of our being. And, um, and Mary's a good model for that as well. Um, so, I, as I grew, I saw how strong our mother is, how strong our lady is, um, against, against some of the, um, the challenges in the world today.

So, um, while I was in studying, I also felt a call to consecrated life. It, it was, it was a long journey there, discerning that call, because when I felt the call, I thought, well, I'll start visiting convents and religious orders. But it was very clear that wasn't it, and so I felt the call, but couldn't find [00:20:00] the place where that call was leading me.

Um, then I found out about a consecration, um, to a life of virginity in the world for laywomen, and was able to, um, um, my, speak to my bishop, and he was okay with, with me proceeding. Um, And so I did that consecration, um, which is very Marian. Here we are again with Our Lady. Very Marian in the sense that it's the bride of Christ, um, spiritual motherhood, and, um, discipleship.

Uh, the daughter, you know, we're supposed to do what we can for our local parish, pray for the priests of our diocese, pray for the people of our diocese. But the part of all of the vocation there that [00:21:00] really stands out to me is the spiritual motherhood part. When I think about Our Lady as virgin, spouse, um, bride, mother, I, preparing for this talk, I see where I recognize all of them in my life, but yet motherhood is the big one.

Mary as my mother, but also participating in spiritual motherhood. Um, I remember part of the bishop's sermon that is in the liturgy for the consecration, um, said you have renounced physical motherhood and family and children for spiritual motherhood, bringing many to birth in the faith or rebirth in the faith.

And I have to say that that is probably something [00:22:00] that connected with me as a Marian element of this consecration and that I see, um, actually, um, see the results of it, put it that way. Um, sometimes what we do brings blessings to many and we don't even know it. Um, sometimes we're given a blessing to see

where that affects other people's lives. And the few times I've had those blessings to see how grace flows through our vocations, and in this particular instance, spiritual motherhood, it actually had me in awe, and afraid, not afraid in a bad way, but a holy fear, of the power God has given to mothers, um, not power in a bad way, but, um, the strength, the grace, to bring blessings to their children.[00:23:00]

So, that again, is very Marian. And helped me see how strong Our Lady is. Um, one of my scripture teachers in school was speaking of, um, this motherly strength. And he said, look in the animal kingdom, just at nature itself. And he said, normally the male of the species is the one who will go out and hunt. And when you think of a male of a species, maybe more aggressive, more, more strong, more a hunter, more, uh, a provider.

But he said, who do you not want to cross if you're attacking the child? He said, you do not want to cross a mother bear if you've disturbed her cubs. So true. This is kind of touching me because I think of how strong Our [00:24:00] Lady is when her children are attacked, or when her children are in trouble, or when her children are, um, struggling, and I've seen it in the world, in living my vocation and the spiritual motherhood, I've seen just, uh, I've experienced that spiritual desire to just help people when I see them in need, or being attacked, or struggling, and Pope Francis’s, um, Novena to Our Lady Undoer of Knots.

I can just picture Our Lady undoing a lot of those knots in people's lives. Um, and in a larger level, undoing the knots in organizations, undoing the knots in our country. Um, just the grace that is there that Our Lady is working on for her children, so. [00:25:00] I've talked a lot. Is anybody out there?

**Michele Foley:** Oh, I'm so glad.

Oh my gosh, Lynn Marie. There, well, you had shared some things with me, you know, over the years, you know, and this is just so beautiful and so overwhelming. I'm sure that there are people and I hope all of you will pray for Lynn Marie and others like her. They, these are, these are the warriors of our time.

These are the people with courage. These are the people who seek the help of Our Lady. And we I'm so glad to know that you are there and that you are doing Our Lady, the work of Our Lady and her son, because we can pray for you and be with you in your, your spiritual [00:26:00] motherhood, because it is so gorgeous and beautiful.

You, you touch so many people's lives, even in, as you mentioned earlier, ways that you may not know, and this is something that it, this vocation is available to anyone, and I actually, I know some people in our parish who have chosen this way. One is a gentleman, and he goes to, um, uh, a senior, uh, assisted livings and apartments and takes communion to the people who cannot come to Mass in person.

And there are others who do similar things. Um, also in Houston, Texas, there is a community of ladies who are the consecrated virgins. And, um, do similar [00:27:00] things in there and that in those parishes there in Houston, Texas. So there, there are many, many like you and you can draw strength from them and know that you have prayers.

But this is very, very interesting. I, you know, we always, don't you think that you thought your path was sort of straight and then it kind of twisted around and things like that. Did you see that in yourself?

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Yes, I had no plans on, um, getting so involved in, um, studies and, also in, um, um, even thinking of a religious vocation.

Um, that kind of all came on as I was just trying to find answers for my daily work. But, uh, yeah, so that was not in the plans. You know when, um, when some of us young [00:28:00] Catholics, um, I talked to some of my friends who are priests and they said they would, pretend they were a priest and, and, and they would have mass when they, they would pretend they were having mass when they were kids.

And, um, they would always play the priest. And, or, or some of my, uh, friends who became sisters, they would put a towel over their head and pretend they were sisters. Um, I used to always pretend that I was a martyr. I'm afraid to say that now because I see where it's possible. But, um, in the world today, I guess I never thought the world, um, goes that way, but it is a bit of a martyrdom, um, to, to try to work at that example of hospital pharmacy.

Yeah. Every day it was a slow martyrdom. Um, Uh, uh, what do they say, white martyrdom, not actually, yeah. And that, that is part of this consecration to a life of virginity for women in the world, because this vocation was built [00:29:00] around the early church virgins, who many were martyrs.

**Michele Foley:** Yeah.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Um, they chose to follow Christ and, and the world at their time, um, many of them were promised to marry big families, political families, and they rejected that to follow Christ totally.

And then they would be, you know, Essentially, a lot of them martyred. St. Cecilia, we see, um, St. Agnes, St. Lucy, like the Virgin Martyrs. And so there is a martyrdom in, um, giving up marriage and family, and there is a martyrdom in, in the world, um, in some ways. So never planned on that. Um, but I did play the martyr.

I used to put dots on my hands and feet, pretend the bad guys were coming and I would say, stop.

**Michele Foley:** Well, Our Lady has her way, [00:30:00] doesn't she? And I always think of her, um, at the at the wedding feast. We need to take a break dear and we will return. Thank you Radio Maria for this wonderful opportunity to share the lives of those who are in touch and in prayer with Our Lady. Please join us on the other side of the break in just a few moments and listen to Radio Maria, a Catholic voice in your home.

**Intro music:** Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing. You reign now in splendor with Jesus, our King [00:31:00] Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave, Maria.

In heaven the blessed your glory proclaim. On earth we your children invoke your sweet name. Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave Maria

Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. Ave, Ave Maria.[00:32:00]

We pray for the church our true mother on earth and beg you to watch over the land of our birth.

**Music break:** You are listening to Radio Maria, a Catholic voice in your home. We now return to our program, All Things Marian.

**Michele Foley:** Welcome friends, whether you're at home or work, or you're driving, or maybe you're outside working, [00:33:00] please know that we sincerely appreciate your listening to us. This is All Things Marian. And today our guest is Lynn Marie Bush, who is a wonderful lady who works in the community and has chosen a very interesting vocation full of prayer and good works of a consecrated religious uh, virgin in the community.

Welcome again, Lynn Marie, and let us continue this beautiful story, which, uh, can reflect many of us and our, our lives as they wind around and we find God in many, many ways. So welcome again, and please continue.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Thank you, Michele. I was thinking of, um, before the break, you mentioned the different vocations for people, and I, I, um, I [00:34:00] have a few I just wanted to mention in case anybody out there is feeling the call to something, and as I did, but didn't know it even existed.

Um, there's just a few I'd like to mention, um, as I was searching things I saw, so just without taking too much time. Um, as I said, the vocation that I was called to is consecration to a life of virginity for women in the world. Now, this specific vocation would require people to have not been married. Um, there's another vocation in the early church that I think if it were better known, there'd be a lot more takers, because I've found women who were living this way without even knowing there was an actual consecration for it, um, a consecration of widows.

And, and, um. That was in the early church, and at Vatican II, they brought that back as well, where, um, people who [00:35:00] are widowed, can, um, may be called to not remarry and to have that, um, spirituality, excuse me, of praying for people and didn't read too, too much about this, but it's out there and, um, could consecrate till the end of their life, um, their, their, their remaining single after they were widowed and, and, um, um, praying and serving in the way that that vocation does.

Like I said, I didn't read too, too much about it, but boy, I think there'd be some takers on that if they knew it. Um, I, I think I've seen people living that without knowing there was actually consecration for it. Right, right. I've seen, yeah. I

**Michele Foley:** see that.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** I see

**Michele Foley:** that. I've seen many, many ladies who have lost their husbands who devote themselves, not just to their family, but to works in the community, especially [00:36:00] within the parish and live that life.

So, yes, yes. I was going to mention that if you didn't. I'm glad you did. I think, as you say, people would be very interested in pursuing this and what it means and how it would work. So, yes, please continue.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** And to have, yes, and to have the consecration on that just brings it more life and grace. So I wanted to mention that.

And then also, um, particular institutes. If people are drawn to a particular religious order or the charism of a founder of an order or foundress of an order like, um, Franciscans with St. Francis, or Dominicans with St. Dominic, um, if people are drawn to that and want to commit themselves in a singular way to

that charism, but don't feel called to actually join the Franciscans in a monastery. Um, there are, there [00:37:00] are third orders, which, uh, lay people who are married or single could pick up the spirituality. But there's a, um, there is actually, it's a, it's actually a religious life where they take vows and they see themselves as leaven in the world.

So, so they take vows, um, poverty, chastity, obedience, or any combination thereof. But live in the world that Franciscan spirituality or that Dominican spirituality and, um, um, actually choose to remain single and vow their life in that way, but to remain hidden like leaven and transform the world through that.

So, so that's out there as well. That's something I looked into briefly with the Passionists, but, but, um, but didn't, didn't, didn't, I saw where that wasn't what my call was. Um, but that's very beautiful. So if you feel a call, see if there's something for it there, because that's really how I experienced the call was I could describe what I was called [00:38:00] to, but I didn't know it existed.

Um, so, so part of what I wanted to speak of today is Mary with vocations too. So this kind of leads right into that. Um, that was a big part of Mary in my life was. Um, the whole thing, the dignity of vocations, whether it be to married life or consecrated life, uh, whatever it might be, or to single life in the world, um, as you're looking for where God's leading you and living your baptismal consecration, um, um, there's, and this kind of involves the angels too, so understanding Mary helped me to I understand the angels.

I don't know why. This is probably just a personal thing. It's not, not like anything I was taught in any of my theology classes or anything. It's just, when I had a great devotion to angels, [00:39:00] and when I learned more about Mary, it all kind of just fell into like a family or a community and, and came alive in my life.

Um, especially in the area of vocation. And so I wanted to just share something with that. It's not, it's not any kind of teaching or anything, just an experience, just, just my experience of how I, I like to see Mary as Queen of the Angels. Um, now that is, that is one of her titles, um, Queen of the Angels.

And, and in Scripture, in Scripture, you see Gabriel coming to Mary at the Incarnation. And just that little passage that is over in a paragraph or two, um, in Sacred Scripture, has so much in it. If you’re able to sit and ponder that. Um, and where it came clear to me, I, I was actually in St. Michael's Cave in Italy there.

We, we did a pilgrimage where we [00:40:00] went to San Giovanni Rotundo, and then while we were there with the Padre Pio shrine and everything, we went to St. Michael's Cave, I think in Gargano or something like that. Um, now this is a place where St. Michael appeared. And, um, there were a lot of pilgrimages from Europe to this, uh, cave.

And St. Francis, we were speaking about the Franciscans, St. Francis did a pilgrimage to this cave and, um, did not feel worthy to go in. Could feel the holiness and did not feel worthy to go in and stayed outside. Um, I knew that, I knew that much when our, our tour bus, uh, went there. And I thought, okay, so I need to prepare myself to be respectful of the holiness of this place.

Um, not just walk into it like a tourist. So, so, so, I was thinking of St. Francis, and you could truly feel [00:41:00] a, a spirituality there, put it that way. Uh, um, a spiritual holiness. You could feel a very strong and powerful presence and, and when I went in, what first came to my mind was the angels, um, serving my vocation.

That bothered me a little when I think of the angels serving something related to me. That, that kind of at first is like, wait, is my pride or something going on here? But in the midst of that, I saw the preciousness of vocation. Um, and like I said, this could be religious life, consecrated life, married life vocation.

Is that vocation that God gives us, it was almost as if I understood how the angels serve that voc serve us in that vocation. [00:42:00] Um, and then I got comfortable with that because I thought, look how Gabriel served Mary in her vocation. Now, of course, her vocation is the ultimate vocation, um, but, but still along those lines.

And, and so it actually helped me to, um, respect and have that holy fear of living that vocation as God has given me the grace to do. And that applies to anybody, to live their vocation as God has given them the grace to do. Um, and the, the preciousness of that, that angels would work to protect it, to help us in it, um, whatever it may be.

And Mary was just a model of that for me in that encounter at the Incarnation with Gabriel. Um, so if anybody's looking for their vocation or for help in living their vocation, get the angels and Our Lady, [00:43:00] um, um, before you and, and, um, and reflect on that. That was a big role Mary played in my vocation as well.

Um, and in speaking of Mary at the Incarnation, um, I wanted to mention something John Paul notes in his Marian Catechesis, his very first Wednesday audience that he had dedicated, I believe, 72, 71, 72 Wednesday audiences to his Marian Catechesis. Um, his very first one, he connects Mary at the Incarnation, when Gabriel came and she conceived, um, the Son of God in her womb.

He connects that to Pentecost, where Mary is at, in the upper room with the [00:44:00] Apostles. Now, the connection in those two events in Mary's life, um, was the Incarnation, she was going to give birth. She was present at the conception and bringing to birth Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the God man. At Pentecost, she is present with that same Holy Spirit that overshadowed her that comes into the upper room at Pentecost and gives birth to the church, the mystical body of Christ.

So there is a mystery in Mary's life, and that involves us, um, where Gabriel comes to her in her, in her special vocation to be the mother of God, the mother of the God man, and then she's also the mother of the mystical body of Christ, the church, which is each one of us, um, and us as a group, us as [00:45:00] members of the mystical body of Christ.

Um, so so you see her role continuing as mother, not just for Christ, the head of the church, but the mystical body of Christ in the world. Um, and I thought that was a brilliant insight. I'm sure early church fathers spoke of things like that too, but that was the first time I encountered it. It was in John Paul's Wednesday audience.

Um, and Mary's presence in the mystical body of Christ. Um, for women in the world specifically, I'll speak on that now, I'm, I'm doing my doctorate on St. Edith Stein and St. John Paul II's understanding of Marian spirituality and Mary, um, Mary, Marian theology. And, um, St. Edith Stein saw where, when any woman is open to grace and brings that motherliness into the world, [00:46:00] Mary is present.

Um, and she practiced that to the extreme in the concentration camps when mothers were so paralyzed with fear that the children were kind of wandering and and and she would be a motherly presence of peace in the midst of a concentration camp. So just for women to speak of our spirituality Edith Stein presents it beautifully and you can read a lot of this if you want to in her essays on women.

**Michele Foley:** Okay.

**Lynn Marie Bush:** It's where she gave, she gave lectures across, across, um, Europe, and, and she spoke, uh, mostly to teachers, um, to, to women teachers.

And the importance of them sitting at the foot of Jesus, and being transformed, and then bringing that to, um, bringing that to their [00:47:00] students, and training women in how to be authentic women and have these gifts that God has given specifically in special ways innately to women and for example, um, Edith Stein recognizes that women have a way of seeing God's work in the soul, not just their own, but of others and to help in guiding that.

By giving them a place to grow, almost like a womb, a safe place to grow and be nourished and, and, um, so women have this gift of recognizing spiritual matters in themselves and in other people, which she also talks about the downfall of that if, like, women are gossipers or want to have power or stuff like that, the dangers of it on the human being.

But, but the gift it can be to help people grow [00:48:00] spiritually and as a person, um, and that all women can participate in this and in special ways. And she'll go into how that takes detachment because you don't want to tell someone else what to do. You want to provide. I mean, you want to guide them. You want to teach them.

You want to let them assimilate it. You want to let them have room to grow and protect the area around them, so it can grow in a healthy way. Um, and so there's so much beautiful writing about the gift of women bringing this Marian spirit into the world. Um, so I wanted to mention that to, uh, to people who may be looking to read on that or pray on that.

Um, Sounds like you're going to say something. I don't know.

**Michele Foley:** I was just so excited about what you're saying that, um, is that, uh, her writings on women? Is it a book or is it a series [00:49:00] of, um, uh, essays or for lesson plans?

**Lynn Marie Bush:** Yes, it, it's, it, it is a series of, um, talks that she gave, um, as, and, and this was right around the time Germany, was, um, going under Hitler, and she was being persecuted as a Jewish woman.

Yeah. And, um, and, and being kind of pushed out of academia because of that. And, um, so it's a series of talks she gave right before all that happened. Mm hmm. And she traveled to, uh, Switzerland, all around Germany. Uh, giving these talks mostly to, uh, schoolteachers, women schoolteachers. But when, in the book, Essays on Women, you can see, like, when and where she gave the talk and to whom.

And, and, um, it, it's beautiful. And it, it talks about Mary being in the mystical body. And then [00:50:00] how Mary's presence in the mystical body, uh, comes to the world through women who open to grace. And and live their womanhood authentically. So an authentic act of, um, grace coming through women to the world, um, um, it, it's, it's very spiritual to read this.

And it enhances your spirituality. So I would encourage people to look at that. Um, speaking of which, uh, Cardinal Ratzinger, he's an interesting, when you read him on Mary, at first it seems like he was struggling to find the theological place that he wanted to be comfortable with Mary and his personal life. And I think encouraged by von Balthasar, um, the Swiss theologian von Balthasar, um, Cardinal Ratzinger [00:51:00] started meditating on this and comes out with the most beautiful understanding of Mary and the Church.

He, he speaks of, um, Mary. There's one instance I want to talk about here to just keep on the line with what we were talking about. He speaks on God giving, the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary and Jesus being conceived in her womb. And then how once Jesus is conceived in Mary's womb, it's like soil. When a seed goes into soil, it gathers stuff from that soil that it needs to grow.

And then, that made me just think of how much of Mary, as soil, did the conception of Jesus pull into his person. Obviously, he took his flesh from her. Um, [00:52:00] but, but just pull in from Mary, and then be given to the world. Now, my favorite theological subject, along with Mariology, is Moral Theology. So I just kind of think of this as, grace comes to us.

Mary has been incredible at teaching me what grace is, and how it's alive in our lives. And so that grace comes into us, absorbs stuff from us, so that beautiful actions come out, graced actions come out into the world. Um, and with us as a soil that nourished that seed of grace into the world. Um, so, um, I could go on and on about Mary and grace and how it helps us to understand what grace is and live grace, but she definitely is the, the dispenser of grace, the, uh, the one who fully lives grace, and then how we imitate that and do the, do little acts the same.

**Michele Foley:** Thank you so [00:53:00] much. This has been a wonderful day and a wonderful visit with you and to share so many things about your journey with Mary, and we need, unfortunately, we need to sign off and thank you again for your, your, your presentation and, uh, your journey. We will pray with you as we do every day for everyone who listens and everyone who is part of Radio Maria, a Catholic voice in your home. Join us again next week on All Things Marian brought to you by the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton in Ohio.

We thank Radio Maria all our listeners and a Catholic voice in your home is there for you 24 hours a day. God bless you all. And goodbye for now.[00:54:00]

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