

# Turning to Mary

Like many young girls, as I was growing up, I spent long hours playing at motherhood. My dolls had featured roles in this drama, with fanciful names and elaborate outfits. I faithfully cooked for my children, and rocked them, and put them to bed. We lived in palaces and sheds, and survived a surprising array of dangerous situations. Though the dolls were eventually packed away, throughout my adolescence and early adulthood I was positive that one day I would experience motherhood in a real and lasting way.

But it wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. After dealing with the heartbreak of infertility for seven years, my husband and I were chosen to adopt a beautiful little boy. Finally, I could do all of the mother things I had dreamed of: snuggles and bedtime stories, feeding and dressing and playing with this amazing little person. And I have found so much joy in motherhood. But it is not always easy. I still feel the pain of all these years of infertility and disappointment. I am laid low by the pains and struggles my son faces. I am discouraged at times by the mostly thankless daily labor of parenthood.

I have found myself turning more and more to Mary in prayer over the last several years. I have found solace in praying to her immaculate heart, a heart that was itself pierced with the sword of sorrow. Mary is the mother of my motherhood; she intimately knows my successes and failures, my joys and sorrows. The sword that pierced her heart has also rent my heart many times over.

This Mother's Day, I am thinking of all of my fellow mothers who I have walked with on this path of joy and sorrow, delight and drudgery. I am praying for those who have had their heart split in two from the sword of sorrow – miscarriages, stillbirth, disease and death of beloved children. I am

thinking of all those who mother children in the roles of aunts and friends and teachers and coaches. And I pray that Blessed Mary, mother of all of us pilgrim mothers, may hold our fragile and scarred and hopeful hearts in her loving embrace.