

Homily on the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God, 1-1-16

- **Does anyone know who Michele Obama is?**
- **Does anyone know who Eleanor Roosevelt was?**
- **Does anyone know who Ladybird Johnson was?**

Yet their greatness to a great extent rest on the reputations of their husbands being elected president.

And why are these three women so well known?

They are all wives of presidents.

Each have done great work:

Michele Obama: education

Ladybird Johnson: beautification of natural settings of roads

Eleanor Roosevelt: race relations and role of women

Today we celebrate the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God.

The church has celebrated this feast from early times.

This title of Mary, the Mother of God, was dogmatically adopted at the [First Council of Ephesus](#) (431)^[4] as a way to assert that [Jesus is God](#), and therefore, his mother can be called Mother of God. Her greatness flows from our belief in the greatness of her son, Jesus, the Son of God.

(PAUSE)

National Geographic December 2015 issue

- **since 40 AD 2,000 appearances of Mary recorded,**
- **every continent**
- **17 approved by Vatican**
- **Muslims honor of Mary**
- **Special work of Mary: Guardian of the little ones:**
 - **Appeared to the poor and the lowly**
 - **Guadalupe,**
 - **Fatima**
 - **Lourdes**

Key question for today: Do we overdue our Marian devotion?

Our real struggle with giving Mary her rightful role in our faith life is our struggle with surrendering to the love of Jesus Christ and

**our struggle that the Spirit of the risen Lord
is leading the Church. (repeat)**

Second Vatican Council:

**2500 bishops gathered in the 1960's to give a
direction for the church**

**Studied the best of our traditions and
redirected the focus of church.**

**Almost every vote of the Council was a
majority of 95%**

**Only on the question of Mary were they
almost evenly divided.**

Final result of their deliberations:

- 1. Mary is indeed the Mother of God.**
- 2. Her rightful place is not in a separate
document but as a chapter in the
document on the Church. Mary is placed
directly in the in the position of the
person who best responded to believing**

the Spirit was speaking to her that she would be the mother of God. She totally opened herself to receive the Spirit of the living God and gave birth to her son. For this reason, she becomes the model of how we become adopted sons and daughters of God, co-heirs with Christ and disciples with Mary in the work of her son.

Just as Michele Obama's life cannot be understood outside of their roles as wife of the president,

So also Mary's role as Mother of God cannot be understood outside of her role as being the Mother of the Savior of the world.

So too, my brothers and sisters, our life cannot be fully understood outside our role as children of a loving God revealed to us by Jesus Christ. Mary's YES to the angel Gabriel was critical to the work of God in our world.

So too, our YES each day is critical to the work of the Spirit working in God's people, the Church.

Mary, we pray that you intercede for us for the grace and strength to be faithful witnesses of the Gospel. May we, like you and your son, be especially attentive to the poor, they young and the needy in our midst and in our world. Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.