



Joyful Living Monstrance

- By Mary Tamez and Ana de la Rosa - Texas

Woman touched by God, authentic reflection of Mary
Mujer inspirada por Dios, reflejo auténtico de María

[During a time of adoration,] when you make a visit to a Catholic church, chapel, or a Schoenstatt Shrine, you will notice that at the front and center of the altar is a vessel used for adoration. This vessel is called a monstrance, which means to demonstrate or show. It is a liturgical vessel, beautifully designed and [often] lavished with gold and precious stones.

The first monstrance was used in France and Germany in the 13th century. Its purpose [was and still] is to expose the Consecrated Host, the most precious Body of our Eucharistic Lord. The faithful come to adore our Lord Jesus Christ through adoration, prayer, thanksgiving and petition. We are humbled to receive our Lord's blessing at Benediction with the Holy Monstrance. It is a way to deepen our faith and love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the faithful, especially the Schoenstatt women and mothers, the monstrance is an emblem for Mary, the Blessed Mother. She is the first monstrance, not of genuine metal, but of flesh and blood, the *Living Monstrance*. The artist who fashioned this *Living Monstrance* is God, the creator of Heaven and Earth, the Creator of this masterpiece: Mary. The Triune God's omnipotence, wisdom, and love created her with the most precious outfit [and adornment] to be the *Living Monstrance* for the Son of God.

As a *Living Monstrance*, she is the Christ-bearer, Christ-bringer and Christ-server. In 1946, Fr. Kentenich gave a talk on the *Living Monstrance*. In this talk the Schoenstatt Mothers who were present heard words which seemed to be a special call for them. They became inspired to take up the monstrance ideal as their own. They worked spiritually and materially for the monstrance and the monstrance ideal. They strived to become a little Mary, a *Living Monstrance*. Years later, the Schoenstatt Mothers presented the gift of the beautiful monstrance to the Adoration Sisters for the future Adoration Church in [Schoenstatt,] Germany.

As women and mothers in this time and age, we too want to become a little Mary, a *Living Monstrance*. We want to imitate our mother in the virtues of prayer, love, joy, kindness, and her many other virtues. She will transform our being and help us become more like her. We look to Mary and follow her example of service to others especially in our own families. We are instruments in the hands of our Mother doing our ordinary work extraordinarily well. Being

wives and mothers, God gives us the greatest gift of all, our children and grandchildren. We have the task of helping to raise them; we can only do this with the help of Mary, our Mother. She is the great educator who teaches us how to help our children to love God by being kind, gentle, and respectful to[ward them] and others. Our Mother had a great respect, admiration, and love for St. Joseph, her husband; therefore, she also teaches us to care for our husbands as she did, and help them, through our example as wives, to become good fathers to our children.

Let us be a vessel of joy and love, a joyful *Living Monstrance*, a Christ-bearer, Christ-bringer and Christ-server. Let our attitude be like Mary's in our everyday struggles; we want to say a loving *yes* to what God may ask of us.

You are the *Monstrance*

Pure and sublime,

In perfect integrity

God's holy Shrine,

Who has born Christ,

The Lord.

-Father Joseph Kentenich

Discussion questions:

1. How does Mary help educate us to be a *Living Monstrance* for our families?
2. What are some virtues of Mary that can help us to be a *Living Monstrance* after her example?
3. What are creative ways to daily remember that our ideal is the *Living Monstrance*?
4. Consider the joyful mysteries of the rosary. How do they show Mary being a *Living Monstrance*? How can these examples of Mary be an encouragement for us to live our daily life?