

# Call your mother

Almost every night after I tuck our boys into bed, I call my mother. As we talk, I have to interrupt our conversation every few minutes to send a child back to bed, but we still manage to connect.

I'm not sure when I started calling every night - maybe after I graduated from college and was living alone in a small city in Pennsylvania. At the time, I wasn't living in the safest neighborhood, and I barely knew my neighbors.

When I was a child, I remember how my mother often seemed to be on the phone with my grandmother. I wondered how they possibly had that much to say. As a grown mother of two now, I understand.

I call for the pie crust recipe because I have no idea where I put the scrap of paper I scribbled it on last time. I ask for medical advice because my son has a cough that just won't go away. I complain about the latest homework assignment or share news of one of our sons' successes. I talk about my day at work and our plans for the weekend. I listen to stories about my sister's children since my mother spends most days with that crew of four children - all 4 and under. Some nights I call while our older son is practicing his trumpet, just so my mother can hear his performance in the background.

Before I dial, I don't stop to make a mental list of what I need to ask or say. I just pick up the phone and the conversation goes from there. Even on days when an argument erupts in the other room and I have to hang up before we've said five words, I am always glad I've called.

In today's world we have amazing technology that makes it easier than ever to connect with people - both those we know and love and strangers who have

something in common with us. But we don't need technology to connect with Jesus and his mother - our mother - in prayer. We can do that from anywhere at any time. And we don't have to have anything specific to say.

That's one of the things I love most about May, that we speak to Mary and celebrate her not because we have something in particular to say, but simply because she is our mother. We line up for May processions and sing, "Bring flowers for the fairest" and "Salve Regina." Children in their first Communion outfits place crowns of flowers on the Mary statue at church.

We pray the rosary alone and in groups, giving May over to Mary during a month when we recognize all mothers - but her in particular. We can, of course, speak directly to Jesus without speaking to his mother, but there are times when it may be easier to relate to or reach out to her.

St. Louis de Montfort is credited with talking about growing closer to Jesus through Mary. He said that true devotion "consists in giving oneself entirely to the Blessed Virgin, in order to belong entirely to Jesus Christ through her."

Giving oneself entirely to the Blessed Virgin sounds like a tall order. But I suppose it begins with a simple "Hail, Mary" and goes from there.

Not surprisingly, my conversations with Mary often get interrupted, just as my phone calls with my mother do. But I imagine the Blessed Mother laughs with St. Joseph as I hurry - not at all full of grace - to wipe up the milk that got spilled all over the table or run outside to find out why the soccer ball is bouncing across the roof.

When you're talking to your mother, she understands. And you can always just pick right up where you left off later.