



Walking with Mary: A Biblical Journey from Nazareth to the Cross

By Edward Sri

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Mary appears only a few times in the Bible, but those few passages come at crucial moments. Catholics believe that Mary is the ever-virgin Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven and Earth. But she also was a human being--a woman who made a journey of faith through various trials and uncertainties and endured her share of suffering. Even with her unique graces and vocation, Mary remains a woman we can relate to and from whom we have much to learn.

In *Walking with Mary*, Edward Sri looks at the crucial passages in the Bible concerning Mary and offers insight about the Blessed Mother's faith and devotion that we can apply in our daily lives. We follow her step-by-step through the New Testament account of her life, reflecting on what the Scriptures tell us about how she responded to the dramatic events unfolding around her.

“This book is the fruit of my personal journey of studying Mary through the Scriptures, from her initial calling in Nazareth to her painful experience at the cross,” writes Edward Sri “It is intended to be a highly readable, accessible work that draws on wisdom from the Catholic tradition, recent popes, and biblical scholars of a variety of perspectives and traditions. With the riches of these insights, we will ponder what her journey of faith may have been like in order to draw out spiritual lessons for our own walk with God.” He add, “It is my hope, therefore, that whether you are of a Catholic, Protestant, or other faith background, this book may help you to know, understand, and love Mary more, and that it may inspire you to walk in her footsteps as a faithful disciple of the Lord in your own pilgrimage of faith.”

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Editorial Review

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Q&A with Dr. Edward Sri

Q. You've written other books about Mary. How is this one different?

A. I've been blessed to teach on Catholic beliefs and practices about Mary and do much research on the Biblical texts that shed light on Mary's role in God's plan of salvation. But this book explores more what Scripture may tell us about Mary's own personal, spiritual journey...her own interior life. The book considers, for example, what was it like for Mary to hear from the angel that she was full of grace, that the Lord was with her and that she was to become the mother of Israel's great king—what would those words from the angel have meant for her as a first century Jewish woman? Or what would Mary have been going through in the dramatic events surrounding her son's birth? And what did it mean that she "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart"?

I invite readers to enter into the Biblical narratives and enter into Mary's experience in those texts, considering what the Scriptures may tell us about Mary's walk with God. Though there are not a lot of New Testament passages in which Mary appears, those texts are packed with meaning and can serve as windows into what God was asking of Mary at various moments throughout her life and into how Mary's response at each step can serve as a model for us in our relationship with the Lord.

Q. What do you hope to accomplish with this book?

A. In this book, I hope to help readers know Mary and her spiritual journey better.

Many of us may know that Mary, as the mother of Jesus, was an important person in the Bible. And Catholics especially may know Mary as the Immaculate Conception, the Ever-Virgin Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven and Earth. But do we know the *humanness* of Mary? Mary was a woman with whom we can all relate. She went through various trials, dangers and sufferings, like we do. She faced moments of discernment, like we do. She experienced times of uncertainty and darkness—times when she did not understand. Though she was endowed with unique graces and privileges, Mary still had to "walk by faith and not by sight."

Mary had to make a profound spiritual journey, in which she took ever greater steps of faith, trust and surrender to God's plan. She stands out as a model of faith in the Scriptures, and I aim to take readers through the various steps of faith Mary made from her initial calling at the Annunciation to her standing at the foot of her Son's cross.

Q. Who is the target audience?

A. When writing it, I envisioned anyone who wants to take a closer look at the person of Mary, to know her better, and to understand the beautiful journey of faith the Lord invited her to take throughout her life. This book is meant to be a highly accessible book—easy to read, engaging and filled with practical insight for our lives. I hope any Christian who wants to walk in Mary's footsteps as a faithful disciple of the Lord will

benefit from this book.

Q. At the beginning of the book you ask the reader to put themselves in Mary's shoes. Was this difficult for you as a man in the 21st century?

A. Entering into the experience of the heroes of the Bible or the saints throughout history is something we all should do. The stories of the saints (whether they be men or women saints) tell us all something about our own humanity, our own challenges and struggles in life, and our own walk with the Lord. I think I have been able to enter into the experiences of women saints such as St. Catherine of Siena, St. Therese of Lisieux and Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta and learn much from them. And the same is true with Mary.

Q. Besides reading the Bible, particularly the Gospels of John and Luke, what other research did you do to prepare for writing this book?

A. I have been doing research on the Biblical passages related to Mary for many years going all the way back to my doctoral studies. Biblical scholarship in recent decades has offered many great insights on these passages, and many of these insights can help shed light on Mary. In the book, I draw from Biblical scholars of a variety of perspectives and faith traditions. I refer to saints, scholars and texts from the Catholic tradition, but I also have learned much from many non-Catholics whose exegesis on Marian passages or reflections on Mary can make a significant contribution to our understanding of the mother of Jesus.

Review

"In *Walking with Mary*, Ted Sri achieves something rare and wonderful: a book that seamlessly combines rich biblical scholarship, a son's insight into the human heart of Mary, and an engaging, vividly accessible style the reader can't put down. This is a marvelous encounter with both the Word of God and the mother of Jesus Christ, the virgin of Nazareth, the model of all Christian discipleship." –Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia

"*Walking with Mary* is a highly readable book that illuminates the scriptural truth about Mary. Drawing on solid biblical scholarship and Catholic tradition, Dr. Sri leads his readers along the spiritual journey of the Mother of our Lord, from her initial call from God to her soul-piercing sorrow at the foot of the cross. With rich insight, he offers practical lessons for the personal challenges we all face as Mary's fellow pilgrims walking the path of faith. This book will help all Christians, not just Catholics, to get to know and love Mary much more." –Dr. Scott Hahn, author of *The Lamb's Supper* and *Consuming the Word*

"A child of God has Christ for a brother—and Mary for a mother. This book delivers on the promise of its title. It's a long and lovely walk we take, on a glorious day, with Jesus and the mom he shares with us. This is what devotion was meant to be: living family life with God." –Mike Aquilina, author of *Faith of Our Fathers: Why the Early Christians Still Matter and Always Will*

"This is no ordinary book! In it, Edward Sri combines a step-by-step Bible study on the life of the mother of Jesus with profound insights into the spiritual life of every Christian. The result is a biblical portrait of Mary of Nazareth that is both extremely informative and deeply moving. The sections on the sufferings of Mary alone are worth the price of the book. Must-reading for anyone who has ever wanted to know who the Virgin Mary really was and what her life means for us today." –Dr. Brant Pitre, author of *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*

About the Author

DR. EDWARD SRI is a nationally known Catholic speaker who appears regularly on EWTN and is the author of several well-loved Catholic books. He is a founding leader, with Curtis Martin, of FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students), and he currently serves as vice president of mission and outreach and professor of theology and scripture at the Augustine Institute master's program in Denver, Colorado. Sri holds a doctorate from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. He resides with his wife, Elizabeth, and their six children in Littleton, Colorado.

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